- **Entertainment / C1**

Lea Salonga: Entertainer of the Year

- **Across / A17**

Radioman shot in General Santos City

- **Lifestyle / D1**

18 ways of looking at a mall

- **Sports / A25**

Blue Eagles complete first-round sweep

Tanong ng Bayan / A22

One-woman policy: Uubra ba sa machong Pinoy?

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High oil prices threaten Asian economic growth

SINGAPORE—Asia's economies, including that of the Philippines, have been able to withstand this year's surge in oil prices but the relentless climb is starting to take its toll and high growth rates are now in jeopardy, according to analysts.

Crude futures prices reached historic highs at nearly $45 a barrel last week, causing a

HIGH OIL/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Malacañang backpedals on nuke plant conversion

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AFTER stirring up a hornet's nest, Malacañang now appears to be backpedaling on the idea of converting the mothballed and hugely controversial Bataan nuclear power plant into a gas-fired facility.

More than that, it now admits that the idea

MALACAÑANG/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, August 9, 2004 ★★★ 80 pages / 9 sections / vol. 19 / no. 243 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Palace insists on oil tax

Gov't-backed bill seeks ₱2/liter hike in levy to raise ₱29.7B

By Carlito Pablo

AS IF spiraling world oil prices were not enough, Filipino consumers are being asked to "bite the bullet" and bear new taxes on petroleum products.

Rep. Joey Salceda (Lakas-Kampi, Albay), in-house economist of the House of Representatives, said an administration-backed measure was seeking a P2 per liter increase in taxes on petroleum products.

Salceda said the petroleum tax, as embodied in House Bill No. 1323, would be the biggest single source of revenue among the eight tax measures that President Macapagal-Arroyo is asking Congress to pass.

If enacted into law, the measure would generate P29.7 billion for the cash-strapped administration, according to Salceda. HB 1323 is authored by Rep. Danilo Suarez (LP, Quezon).

"Clearly, the petroleum tax offers the most substantial potential as a source of recurring revenue flow," Salceda said in a study.

The second biggest source would be the indexation of taxes for "sin products," such as tobacco and alcohol-based drinks. It is expected to bring in P14 billion.

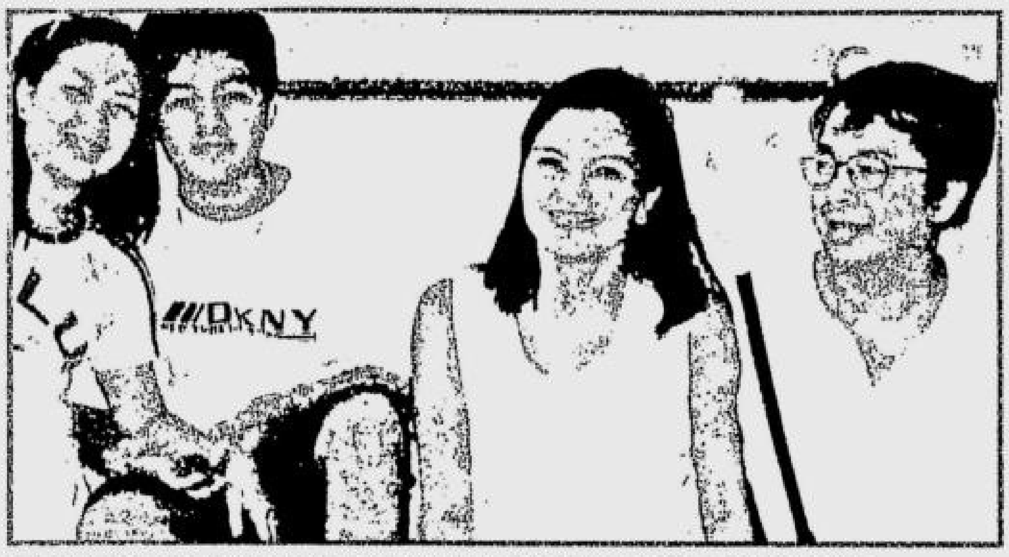
The other tax measures that Malacañang is pushing involve shifting from net income to gross income taxation, repealing the value-added tax system, taxing windfall profits of telecommunications firms, rationalizing fiscal incentives, instituting a targeted tax amnesty, and creating a performance-driven system for revenue agencies.

Ms Arroyo wants Congress to pass the measures because, according to her, improving revenue collection alone would not be enough to cover the budget deficit and finance her programs. The deficit is expected to hit P200 billion this year.

For the petroleum tax to be adopted in the House of Representatives, it must get the support of more than half of the 236 members of the chamber.

But a number of members of the House have formed a group to oppose the new tax measures. A total of 139 representatives have

PALACE/ A8



DR. JONATHAN Flavier with wife Patricia and children, Pauline and Carlo: No compromise on manhood.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

STREET vendor Jose "Boy Dagis" Garcia with wife Nilda and children, Nelson, Nelros, Nestor, Wilson, Jose Jr., Baby and Rose: Sharing improved sexual prowess with his neighborhood drinking buddies.

A TALE OF TWO VASECTOMIES

Take the cut, family planning expert tells Pinoy macho men

By Volt Contreras

HOW COULD Jose "Boy Dagis (Little Rat)" Garcia ever forget? As actress-turned-councilor Aiko Melendez addressed the crowd outside the barangay hall of Payatas II, Quezon City, he lay tensely in the small clinic inside, having his free vasectomy.

"I was done in just 10 minutes. Her speech went even longer," said Garcia, 38, now recalling with amusement how he took advantage of a visiting medical mission in March last year and did "the right thing" for his young yet unbearably large family.

For someone who had fathered seven children in a span of 14 years, but who at best could make just around P300 a day peddling soap bars and shampoo in the streets, this high school dropout may not be the type who would debate or lose sleep over the moral and religious questions attached to artificial birth control methods.

What seems clear is that he and countless other Filipino men represent a broken mold in the Pinoy's much-tauted macho image: Husbands finally sharing the effort with their wives and even taking the lead in family planning.

"My wife was willing (to undergo tubal ligation), but the doctor advised against it because of her high blood pressure," he said in an interview on Friday. "That's when I decided that it should be me."

Garcia also explained that if it was his wife Nilda, 36, who had gone under the knife, she would have needed to rest for two to three months, "whereas I can go back to work in just three days" after the vasectomy.

He also admitted being driven by remorse at seeing his pre-adolescent children forced to share in the chore of taking care of the younger ones. His eldest is a 12-year-old son, while the youngest, also a boy, is only 11 months old. Between them are siblings aged 10, 8, 7, 4, and 2. The first four children are currently studying in a public school.

A world away from Garcia's Payatas is Dr. Jonathan David Flavier of Ayala Heights, also in Quezon City. He could

TAKE/ A20

Carl's so handsome, twins' ma gushes

By Cathy Guballa
Contributor

"OH, MY God!" Arlene Aguirre gushed when doctors removed the dressing from her 2-year-old son's face. "He's so handsome!"

Dr. David Staffenberg, a plastic surgeon at The Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center (CHAM) in New York, witnessed the happy moment on Saturday. It had been less than three days since the boy, Carl, was surgically separated from his twin, Clarence, in a 17-hour procedure, the last of four.

The twins had been fused in the head. Now in separate beds and still sedated to keep them from moving too much, they were said to be opening their eyes intermittently, and reacting to their mother's voice.

Staffenberg said Arlene's reaction had been specially gratifying for him as a member of the surgical team. At this point, he said, the best part was that Clarence and Carl were beginning to thrive each on his own, with the doctors seeing signs of recovery much earlier than expected.

"They have bounced back like off a slingshot," the surgeon said.

Specifically, he added, the doctors were pleased with indications that Carl's kidneys were beginning to strengthen. While the boys were still conjoined, Carl's kidneys had deferred to the function of his brother's kidneys.

"It's all been encouraging," Staffenberg said, but added that it was "still very early" to make conclusions. Individually, the twins face numerous additional procedures.

Neurosurgeon Dr. Willy Lopez, the lone Filipino member of the team, recalled that during the surgery which started at 7 a.m. on Aug. 4 (7 p.m., Manila time), his biggest challenge was how to remain calm.

He said Dr. James Goodrich, head of pediatric neurosurgery at CHAM, and also team leader, was "pretty anxious."

In a phone interview, Lopez told the INQUIRER: "That was understandable. The eyes of the world were on him [Goodrich],

CARL'S/ A22

MASUSTANSYA NA, LIBRE PA!

Nutribun revived to feed Baguio schoolchildren

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Remember the Nutribun?

Every day for a week now, businesswoman Chiqui Torres has been rising at dawn to fire up her oven and bake her version of the vitamin-fortified bread, with which she feeds about a hundred

NUTRIBUN / A22

BACK TO HOMEGROUND

Bishop Oscar Azarcon Solis, the first Filipino to be ordained a bishop in the United States, is welcomed by his sisters, Helen Solis (left) and Celia Tapia, upon his arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. ***(See story on Page A2.)***

ROGER MARGALLO

RP starts first of 7 lifetimes of healing environment wounds

By Leonarda N. Camacho
Contributor

COMMENTARY

EDITOR'S NOTE: The author is the commissioner for science, technology and environment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) office in the Philippines.

AFTER 18 months of monitoring the status of the Philippine environment, we are now in the healing stage, believe it or not.

Considering the present state of our forests, mountains and bodies of water, it may take seven lifetimes to heal the wounds.

But no matter. We start the first lifetime now.

By a stroke of fate, our healing partner is Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who is also the director general of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Luckily for all of us, Neri agrees that the new paradigm shift to eco-economy is the smart thing to do.

As a matter of fact, he submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo his plans that consider the economy and the environment together—in other words, sustainable development. He batted for reforestation, responsible mining and protection of fish sanctuaries which, in their totality, will create more jobs, a goal of the Arroyo administration.

For the first time in a long time, we are going to do aerial seeding in the Sierra Madre range.

A group of volunteer environmentalists, who are alumni of Class '64 of the Kamuning (Quezon City) Elementary School and Class '68 of La Salle Greenhills and led by Cesar

RP STARTS/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

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SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: D.J. Yap, PDI RESEARCH/08/09/04

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Legazpi	Occasional Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Occasional Rains
Calapan	Occasional Rains	**Davao**	Occasional Rains

Second FRONT PAGE

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Ebdane insists on arming media

By Christian Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

DESPITE the criticism, Philippine National Police chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. is standing pat on his proposal to allow reporters to carry firearms in the wake of the rash of killings of media practitioners.

PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao yesterday said Ebdane's office would still issue gun permits to journalists whose lives are under threat.

In a span of one week, two provincial journalists were gunned down by unidentified armed men while another sustained a serious gunshot wound in separate incidents in different parts of the country.

At the Senate, neophyte Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has filed two bills to address the security concerns of journalists.

Goltiao said Ebdane was willing to relax the rules if only to partially address the concerns of newsmen whose lives may be in danger.

But media practitioners, like all other applicants, would have to go through the normal procedure for acquiring permits to carry firearms outside of residences (PTCFOR), he said.

Journalists applying for a PTCFOR must provide solid evidence that someone is indeed trying to harm or kill them, Goltiao added.

Ebdane's suggestion for journalists to carry firearms was just one of the measures the PNP had proposed.

Goltiao said the best way to end the problem was still for authorities to solve the crimes and send the perpetrators to jail.

The latest journalist to be killed was Arnel Manalo, a correspondent of the tabloid Bulgar and radio station dzRH, who was gunned down in Bauan, Batangas. Five days earlier, broadcast journalist Roger Mariano was killed in Sta. Cecilia, Ilocos Norte.

Quoting Senior Supt. Don Montenegro, Batangas provincial police director, Goltiao said local authorities in the area had already pinpointed the suspects in the killing of Manalo. He refused to elaborate.

In the case of Mariano, he said that Ilocos Norte investigators were still looking into several angles in the killing.

"The PNP is doing everything to solve the cases," Goltiao assured.

But hardly had investigators made significant breaks in the cases when another broadcaster was shot early Sunday.

Jun Abayon, a reporter of GMA 7's local radio station dxBB, was allegedly shot in General Santos City by William Bael, said to be a bodyguard of world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao. *(See story on Page A17.)*

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Estrada's first bill seeks to amend the Revised Penal Code to make the killing of journalists a crime of murder punishable by death.

The other bill "recognizes that journalists are constantly exposed to danger and they should be accorded greater financial and social security to motivate and encourage them to better perform their duties and responsibilities."

Senate hopes to get down to work

By Christine O. Avendaño

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Drilon said that members of the minority had been offered committee chairmanships, adding that Majority Leader Sen. Francis Pangilinan had been chosen to handle the task.

"We can do our committee work this week," Drilon said.

The Senate has a total of 36 committees which conduct hearings on various areas of concern preparatory to the drafting of measures. Last week, Drilon announced who would chair 21 of the committees, but changes were apparently made because the minority said some of the committees were also offered to their members.

Drilon said the names of the senators to be assigned to two constitutional bodies—the Commission on Appointments (CA) and the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET)—were expected to be disclosed this week as well.

He said seven senators to be named to the CA would come from the majority and five would be selected from the minority. Four senators from the majority and two from the minority would be assigned to the SET.

Minority Leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., meanwhile, said the nine-member minority would hold a caucus today "to tackle the matter of committee chairmanships," among other things.

Pimentel said the committees offered to the minority by the majority remained unchanged.

Last week, he disclosed that the chairmanships of six committees—on women, cultural communities, housing, public information, social justice and cooperatives—had been offered to the minority.

"We will take a look at the proposal (in today's caucus)," Pimentel said.

LOREN Legarda whispers to Kit Tatad (center) and Sen. Alfredo Lim during the thanksgiving Mass and party she gave for her supporters yesterday in Makati City. JESS YUSON

Loren: Plans, protest and Tony's siblings

By Margaux C. Ortiz
and Fe Zamora

"I WILL not fade away."

Former senator and vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda yesterday announced her return to the private sector during a thanksgiving Mass and party celebrated at the Makati View Park in West Rembo, Makati City.

Legarda stressed that she would be gone from the political scene "only temporarily."

She added, "I will still be active not only in the political opposition but in every aspect of everyday life and make sure that the people will always believe in us."

Legarda said that aside from waiting for the results of the protest she and Fernando Poe Jr. had filed before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, she would be busy writing a book on the peace talks between the government and the communist rebels and her role in the release of seven captives held by the rebels in the past year.

"I promised National Bookstore that I would write three books in three years," she said.

She said there have been invitations for her to rejoin the media, where she was a popular broadcaster for two decades before she entered politics.

Legarda also said she would be more active in spearheading the Luntiang Pilipinas and Bessie Legarda Breast Cancer Foundations.

She could mend fences with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro but a reconciliation with her "estranged in-laws" is not in Legarda's calendar.

"It was unfortunate for them, but not for me. *Nagpagamit sila*(They allowed themselves to be used)," Legarda said of Conrad and Amelita Leviste, the siblings of her husband Antonio Leviste who had openly campaigned against her in the last elections.

"It would have been different if they were my friends and they were ranting against me, but we were never close, so there's nothing to mend," Legarda said.

In the heat of the political campaign, Amelita said she did not recognize the Leviste-Legarda marriage as her brother was still legally married to Celia Sarangaya. Amelita also said she and Conrad had not spoken to Antonio for years.

Legarda also dismissed as a "dilatory tactic" the move of two lawyers to resurrect the citizenship issue against Poe.

This time the lawyers, who had brought a similar disqualification case against Poe in March, said the actor could not file an election protest because he was not a natural-born Filipino citizen.

"That [issue] had already been decided by the Supreme Court," Legarda said, "so their move is a dilatory tactic." *With Christine O. Avendaño*

1st Pinoy bishop in US arrives to retrace roots

BISHOP Oscar Azarcon Solis, the first Filipino to be ordained bishop in the United States, is in town to attend a series of celebrations in his honor in Manila and Nueva Ecija.

Solis arrived at 4:45 a.m. on Sunday aboard Philippine Airlines flight PR103. He was met at the airport by well-wishers led by his sisters Celia Solis-Tapia and Helen Solis.

"This is truly an exciting homecoming for me," said Solis. "I will be retracing important relationships that helped mold me, and I will be visiting places that have been a part and parcel of my life and ministry. Most important of all, I am coming home with a spirit of deep gratitude."

This is the bishop's first trip to the Philippines since his ordination to the episcopacy and appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on Feb. 10. Solis has been busy familiarizing himself with his new ministry and coordinating outreach pastoral efforts for all ethnic groups within the archdiocese.

His return to the Philippines will also be a significant homecoming of sorts—with the Ortega-Azarcon-Solis clan which is scheduled to hold a Mass and family reunion.

Friends and well-wishers from Manila, his hometown of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, as well as from the Maria Assumpta Seminary in Cabanatuan City are eagerly waiting to greet the new bishop.

During his stay in the Philippines, Solis will have an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Papal Nuncio to the Philippines, Antonio Franco and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales.

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Loren: Plans, protest and Tony's siblings

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Fe Zamora

"I WILL not fade away."

Former senator and vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda yesterday announced her return to the private sector during a thanksgiving Mass and party celebrated at the Makati View Park in West Rembo, Makati City.

Legarda stressed that she would be gone from the political scene "only temporarily."

She added, "I will still be active not only in the political opposition but in every aspect of everyday life and make sure that the people will always believe in us."

Legarda said that aside from waiting for the results of the protest she and Fernando Poe Jr. had filed before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, she would be busy writing a book on the peace talks between the government and the communist rebels and her role in the release of seven captives held by the rebels in the past year.

"I promised National Bookstore that I would write three books in three years," she said.

She said there have been invitations for her to rejoin the media, where she was a popular broadcaster for two decades before she entered politics.

Legarda also said she would be more active in spearheading the Luntiang Pilipinas and Bessie Legarda Breast Cancer Foundations.

She could mend fences with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro but a reconciliation with her "estranged in-laws" is not in Legarda's calendar.

"It was unfortunate for them, but not for me. *Nagpagamit sila*(They allowed themselves to be used)," Legarda said of Conrad and Amelita Leviste, the siblings of her husband Antonio Leviste who had openly campaigned against her in the last elections.

"It would have been different if they were my friends and they were ranting against me, but we were never close, so there's nothing to mend," Legarda said.

In the heat of the political campaign, Amelita said she did not recognize the Leviste-Legarda marriage as her brother was still legally married to Celia Sarangaya. Amelita also said she and Conrad had not spoken to Antonio for years.

Legarda also dismissed as a "dilatory tactic" the move of two lawyers to resurrect the citizenship issue against Poe.

This time the lawyers, who had brought a similar disqualification case against Poe in March, said the actor could not file an election protest because he was not a natural-born Filipino citizen.

"That [issue] had already been decided by the Supreme Court," Legarda said, "so their move is a dilatory tactic." *With Christine O. Avendaño*

1st Pinoy bishop in US arrives to retrace roots

BISHOP Oscar Azarcon Solis, the first Filipino to be ordained bishop in the United States, is in town to attend a series of celebrations in his honor in Manila and Nueva Ecija.

Solis arrived at 4:45 a.m. on Sunday aboard Philippine Airlines flight PR103. He was met at the airport by well-wishers led by his sisters Celia Solis-Tapia and Helen Solis.

"This is truly an exciting homecoming for me," said Solis. "I will be retracing important relationships that helped mold me, and I will be visiting places that have been a part and parcel of my life and ministry. Most important of all, I am coming home with a spirit of deep gratitude."

This is the bishop's first trip to the Philippines since his ordination to the episcopacy and appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on Feb. 10. Solis has been busy familiarizing himself with his new ministry and coordinating outreach pastoral efforts for all ethnic groups within the archdiocese.

His return to the Philippines will also be a significant homecoming of sorts—with the Ortega-Azarcon-Solis clan which is scheduled to hold a Mass and family reunion.

Friends and well-wishers from Manila, his hometown of San Jose, Nueva Ecija, as well as from the Maria Assumpta Seminary in Cabanatuan City are eagerly waiting to greet the new bishop.

During his stay in the Philippines, Solis will have an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Papal Nuncio to the Philippines, Antonio Franco and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales.

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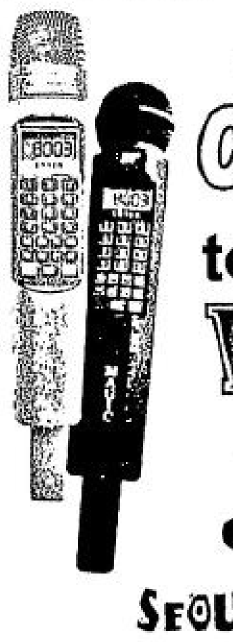

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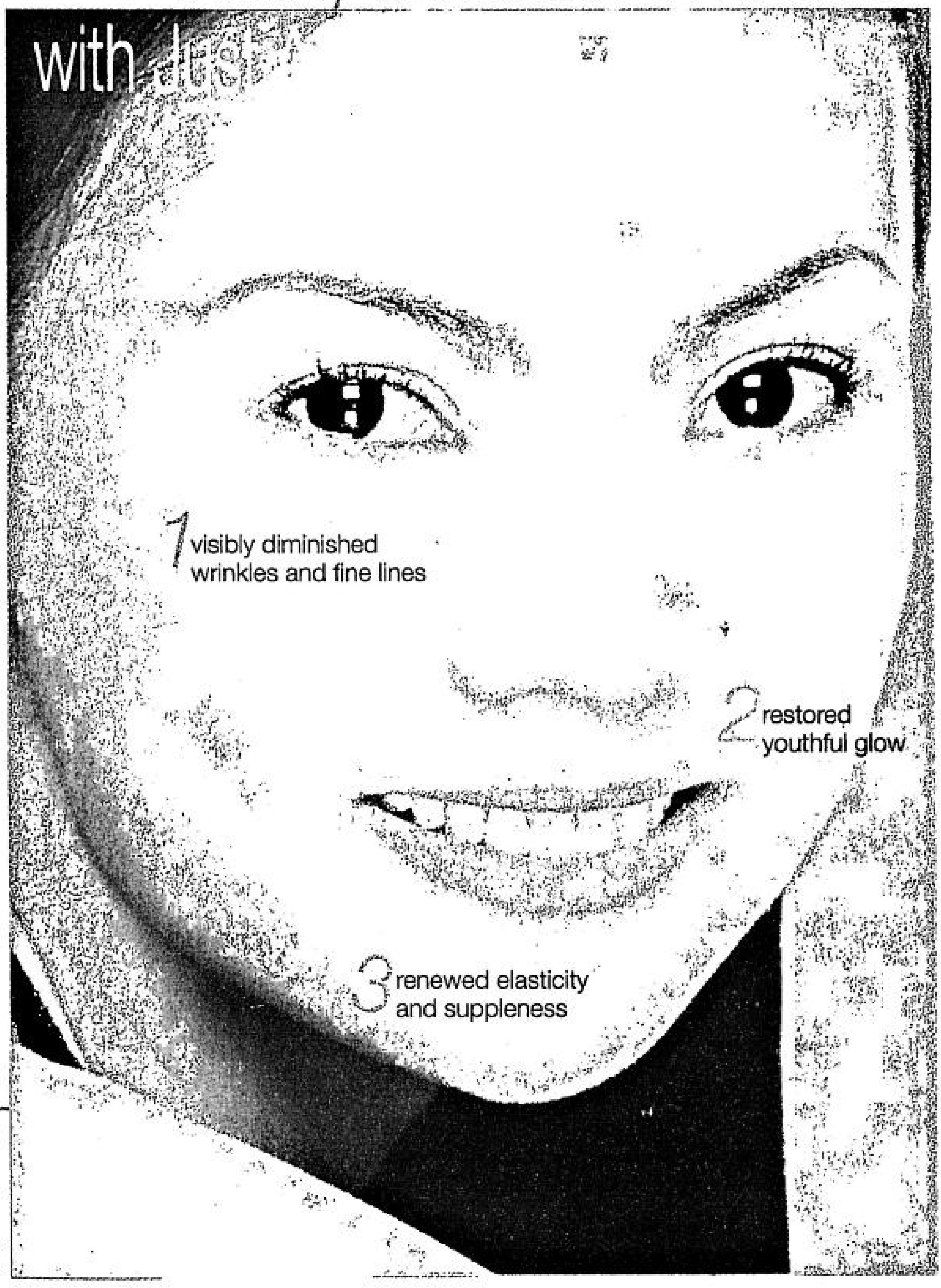
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Malacañang backpedals on nuke plant conversion

From page A1

is a rehash of an old proposal which past administrations always revived whenever confronted with power crises.

Pros and cons

President Macapagal-Arroyo's deputy spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said yesterday that the Department of Energy should weigh the pros and cons of such a proposed conversion, including budgetary and safety concerns.

"Maybe it is best that the Department of Energy should be the one to make a statement on this matter because they are the ones who have information on the expenses to be incurred, if the plant will be operated, as well as who are for or against it," Saludo said when asked on RMN radio if the conversion was the President's idea.

Asked if Ms Arroyo personally favored the idea, Saludo said: "This is a matter that is probably best left to the DOE. They will make a recommendation on whether or not any benefit could be gained out of this (plant)."

Saludo said the first consideration facing the government was to cut power costs while providing for the needs of the country.

"Second, we also need to look at the budget deficit. Will the conversion of the plant add a huge expense for the government? Third is the safety issues because some are saying that even if it is converted, there may still be some safety problems," he said.

Saludo admitted that the conversion plan was not original.

Deathless idea

He recalled that the issue of converting the Bataan plant, built in 1984 at a cost of more than $2 billion, into a nonnuclear facility was also discussed during the term of President Fidel Ramos.

"This proposal keeps coming back every time the costs of power and electricity soar," he said.

Saludo said the country continues to pay for the loans it obtained to construct the plant.

"We should not neglect that (financial obligation) because there will be a big implication for us if we turn our back on it," he said.

Gas from Malampaya

In a speech last week, Ms Arroyo cited the conversion of the Bataan plant as among the options in her program of energy savings and independence. The program calls for putting into operation four idle power plants, including the one in Bataan, as a step to achieving self-sufficiency in energy.

Ms Arroyo said the Bataan plant could be powered by natural gas flowing from the significant gas find in Malampaya in Palawan. Bringing the gas from off-shore Malampaya to the plant in Morong, Bataan, itself could entail huge expenses, economic analysts have said.

The 620-MW Bataan plant has never been used since it was built 20 years ago during the regime of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The $300 million in foreign loans the government borrowed for its construction has ballooned to more than $2 billion because of interest.

Monument to folly

To this day, the government, using taxpayers' money, pays $155,000 a day for the loan interest alone.

Several politicians have denounced the proposal to convert the plant—slammed by Sen. Joker Arroyo as Marcos' "monument to folly"—into a gas-fired project.

But Minority Leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who says he has always favored the conversion of the plant, yesterday called for a "scientific evaluation" of such a proposal.

"It seems it's a big facility for which we spent a huge amount of money and it's been lying idle," Pimentel said in a phone interview.

Regarding doubts on the feasibility of such a proposal, he said: "We don't know that until experts make an evaluation."

Norway

Pimentel said that some time ago, some Norwegians were "interested to see whether the plant could be converted into a gas-fired one.'"

"I think it had been done in Norway," he said.

A militant group of fishermen urged Congress to stop the government from further paying the loans for the idle plant.

"The Filipino people are not obligated to honor these fraudulent loans. The country is in a moral position to reject payment of the Marcos dictatorship's loans. Let the masterminds of the (Bataan) project suffer the consequences of their crime," Fernando Hicap, national chair of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya, said in a statement. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Correction

IN THE Aug. 6 issue, a front-page story—"Journalist gunned down in Batangas; 54th since '86"—misstated the name of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines coordinator for Laguna. The NUJP coordinator is Dennis Espada—not Dennis Esplanada.

* * *

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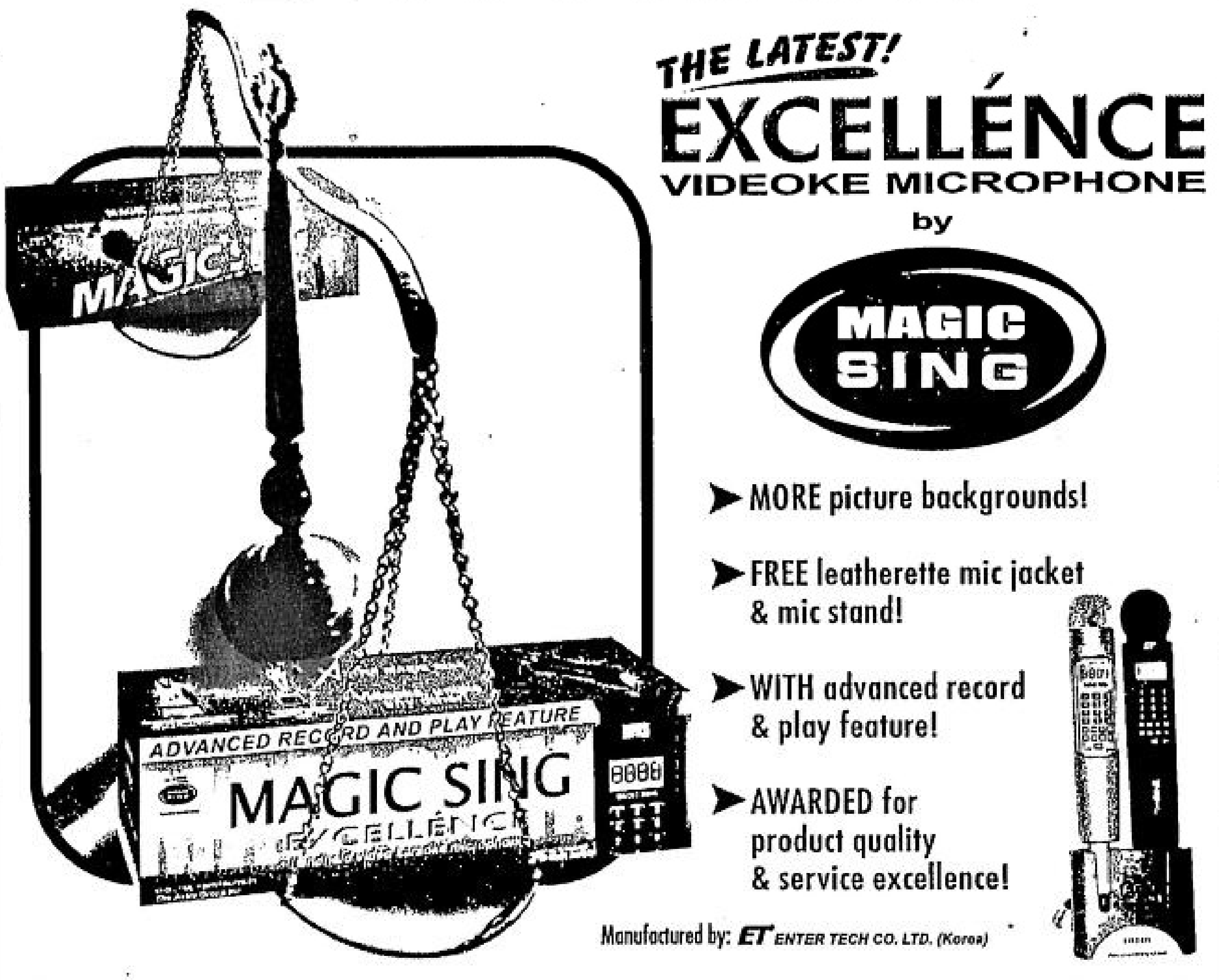

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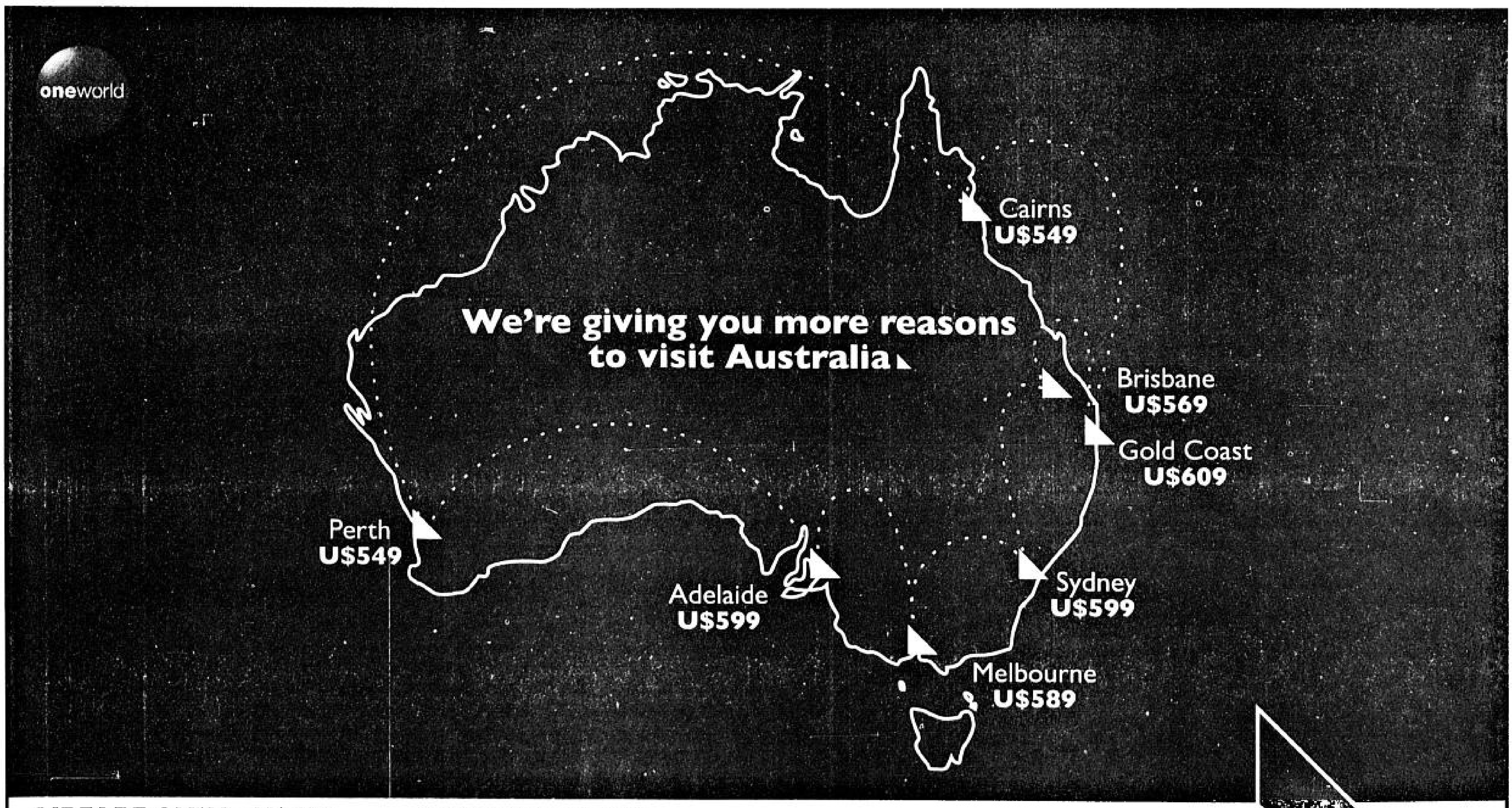

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NPA postpones release of 2 soldier-hostages

By Christian Esguerra

THE POLICE have refused to budge while the military has remained silent on the condition set by the New People's Army for the release of the two soldiers the communist rebels have been holding hostage for more than five months now.

This prompted the NPA to postpone the scheduled release of the two soldiers it has held since March, the rebel group said Sunday.

The Philippine National Police will not suspend its operations in the Bicol region as demanded by the Romulo Jallores Command, the NPA unit holding Lt. Ronaldo Fidelino and Pfc. Ronel Nemeño hostage.

"We cannot be blackmailed into suspending our counterinsurgency operations," Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP spokesperson, told the INQUIRER. "We should not succumb to this kind of pressure."

While the PNP was categorical in its position, the Armed Forces of the Philippines was silent on the NPA's demand the military suspend its own offensive operations in the rebel-infested region.

The bleak outlook comes after 21 people were killed last week in the worst clashes between government forces and the Maoist guerrillas in months.

In separate interviews last week, chief government negotiator Silvestre Bello III and his counterpart in the communist National Democratic Front, Luis Jalandoni, hinted that negotiations were ongoing for the release of Fidelino and Nemeño.

Jalandoni, who quietly flew into Manila last week, was optimistic the two soldiers would be freed before the resumption of formal peace talks between the government and the NDF on Aug. 24.

Jalandoni clarified the suspension of police and military operations in Bicol was not really a condition set by the NPA but a necessary procedure in the release of the captives to allow for their safe turnover to their families.

The NPA said Fidelino and Nemeño were to have been freed last week following an agreement between the NDF and the government peace panel.

But the rebels "had no choice but to cancel the release with regrets" amid continuing military offensives against the rebels. *With AP, AFP*

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Judges are the visible representations of law and justice—Judges are the visible representations of law and justice. They ought to be embodiments of competence, integrity and independence. In particular, judges are frontline officers in the administration of justice. It is therefore essential that they live up to the high standards demanded by the Code of Judicial Conduct. To be able to render substantial justice and to maintain public confidence in the legal system, they are expected to exhibit more than just a cursory acquaintance with statutes and procedural rules. Judicial competence requires no less. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Alcaraz vs Lindo, A. M. No. MTJ - 04 - 1539]

BY R. B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, August 9, 2004
19th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Ezk 1:2-5, 24-28**
Gospel: **Mt 17:22-27**

While Jesus was in Galilee with the Twelve, he said to them, "The Son of Man will be delivered into human hands, and they will kill him. But he will rise on the third day." The Twelve were deeply grieved.

On returning to Capernaum, the Temple tax collectors came to Peter and asked him, "Does your master pay the temple tax?" He answered, "Certainly."

Peter then entered the house, but immediately Jesus asked him, "What do you think, Simon? Who pay taxes or tributes to the kings of the earth: their sons or the other people?" Peter replied, "The others." And Jesus told him, "The sons, then, are tax-free. But so as not to offend these people, go to the sea, throw in a hook and open the mouth of the first fish you catch. You will find a coin in it, take it and let it pay for you and for me."

Commentary

Taxes are not a new invention. In the time of Jesus there was a ground tax of 10 percent of one's grain and 20 percent of one's fruit and vine. There was income tax of 1 percent. There was a poll-tax which had to be paid by every male from the age of 14 to the age of 65, and by every female from the age of 12 to 65... In addition to these there was a duty of from 2.5 percent to 12.5 percent on all goods imported and exported. A tax had to be paid to travel on main roads, to cross bridges, to enter market-places, towns and harbors. There was a tax on pack animals, and a tax on the wheels and axles of carts. There were purchase taxes on goods bought and sold. And there was the half-shekel Temple tax on every male over 20 years of age.

Everyone paid this Temple tax; it became almost a badge of Jewish identity. But in secular kingdoms taxes were not paid by a ruler's family. So if the Temple was indeed "his Father's house," then Jesus should be exempt from the Temple tax.

The implications went far beyond the single case of Jesus, of course. Matthew was a Jewish Christian, writing for Jewish Christians, and no doubt this Temple tax was a burning question for them. In his gospel he has Jesus say: you are exempt, really, but so as not to give offence, pay it anyway. In other words, you don't have to fight every battle, you don't have to take on everyone; let side-issues be side-issues.

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5 groups express interest in Transco

AT LEAST five groups have expressed keen interest in the privatization of the Philippines' $2-billion nationwide electricity transmission facilities, officials said on Sunday.

"Based on the quality of queries by these parties, we should be looking at very competitive offers come negotiation time," said Energy Secretary Vincent Perez in a statement.

The privatization of the power transmission facilities is part of the Philippine government's plan to raise $4 billion to $5 billion to reduce its budget deficit.

The Philippines—Asia's largest sovereign debt issuer after Japan—also aims to sell dozens of power plants owned by the debt-laden National Power Corp. up to the end of 2005.

Perez declined to name the firms that had submitted nonbinding term sheets for a concession agreement to operate the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) on Friday, the deadline set by the government for them to indicate their interest.

He said there were five groups whose offers exceeded the government's expectations.

In June, Perez said US firm AES Corp. and Australia's Trans Grid had expressed interest in leasing the transmission assets of Transco.

Only Singapore Power Corp. had expressed interest in two failed biddings held last year to privatize the transmission assets.

The Philippines, which is struggling to control its budget deficit, failed to privatize the assets last year due to regulatory uncertainty and security concerns after an unsuccessful mutiny by soldiers.

For its third attempt, officials said they would negotiate with interested firms. Government rules allow negotiation on the privatization of assets after two failed biddings.

The winning bidder will operate Transco for 25 years, and the contract is renewable for another 25 years subject to its performance.

The government said it would require the winning firm to pay at least 25 percent of the enterprise value of the business upon the closing of the transaction. As an incentive, investors have the option to pay the balance in installments over a period of up to 25 years.

The winning bidder would be expected to pay around $500 million and assume $1.5 billion in debts, a source close to the sale process said last month.

Perez said the government would also announce on Aug. 16 a revised schedule for the sale of the power plants of Napocor.

The government has so far sold three small hydroelectric power plants.

The first major power plant put up for sale by the Philippines this year, the 600-megawatt coal-fired Masinloc unit, has drawn interest from 17 companies, including six firms from Japan.

Firms need to submit letters of interest on the plant by Aug. 18. The government said it would accept final bids on the Masinloc plant on Oct. 27 after due diligence. *Reuters*

No great loss, Etta says of US action vs RP

SO WHAT?

Rep. Loretta Ann "Etta" Rosales (party-list Akbayan) yesterday shrugged off the United States' striking of the Philippines from the Coalition of the Willing in Iraq.

"It's better that we have been dropped from this coalition on the basis of our willingness to save a human life and assert our national interest than risk that life and continue to support US policies and actions that were based on a lie," Rosales said in a statement.

US Department of State spokesperson Richard Boucher said last week the Philippines was dropped from the coalition following the withdrawal of its token humanitarian contingent from Iraq as demanded by Iraqi insurgents who had captured Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz and threatened to behead him.

On Friday, US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis Ricciardone said the expulsion of the Philippines from the coalition was "not official."

Rosales asserted that the Philippines "should accept with dignity and pride" the US decision.

"After all, the US Senate Intelligence Committee, building upon the findings of the 9/11 Commission, had said that no unimpeachable proof exists to support the main arguments for which the US went to war in Iraq," she said.

"This coalition is maintaining a highly immoral and illegal military presence in Iraq and it is no big loss for our country not to have a part in it," Rosales added.

She maintained that a foreign policy independent of the US will "ensure the safety of our millions of overseas workers not just in the Middle East but everywhere else the danger of terrorist attacks lurks." *Carlito Pablo*

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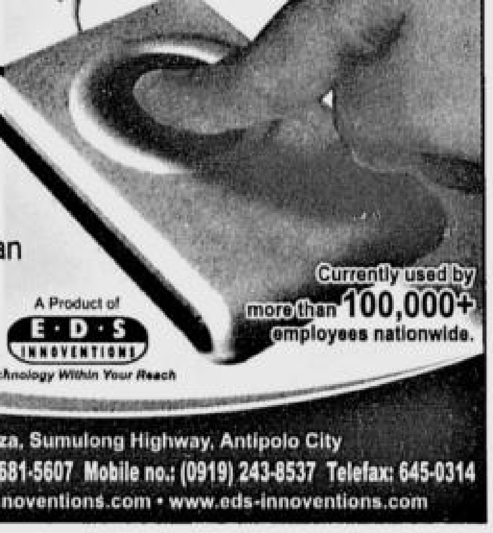
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Kuwait bars Pinoy workers from crossing into Iraq

By Jerome Aning

THE KUWAITI foreign ministry has directed its immigration officers not to allow Filipino workers across the emirate's border with Iraq.

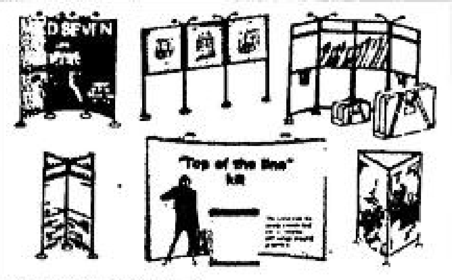
The directive was implemented late last week at the major Iraq-Kuwait border crossing of Abdaly, Kuwaiti media reported yesterday.

The prohibition was made upon the request of the Philippine government due to security concerns following last month's seizure by Iraqi militants of truck driver Angelo de la Cruz.

The Philippines currently maintains a ban on the direct deployment of workers to Iraq. It has also called on countries surrounding Iraq—Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey—to prevent Filipino workers from entering the embattled country.

Iraqi militants have been abducting and killing foreign workers to force their governments and employers to leave Iraq and the United States-led coalition that invaded the country.

Two weeks ago, Saudi Arabia also barred Filipino workers from crossing into Iraq.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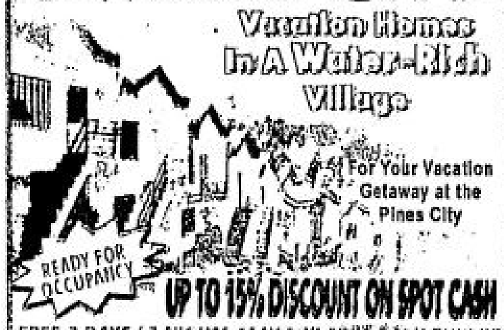

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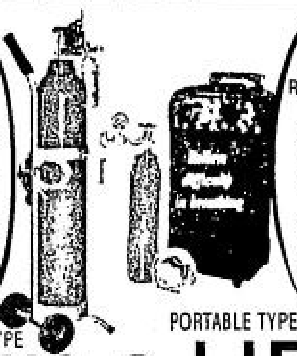

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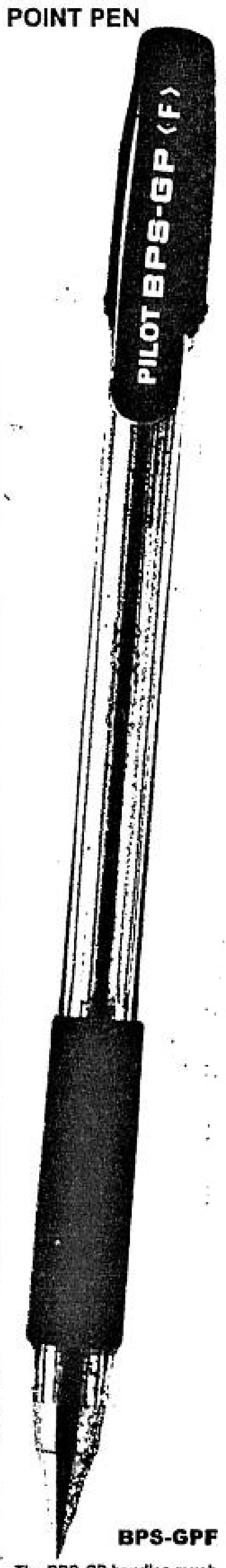

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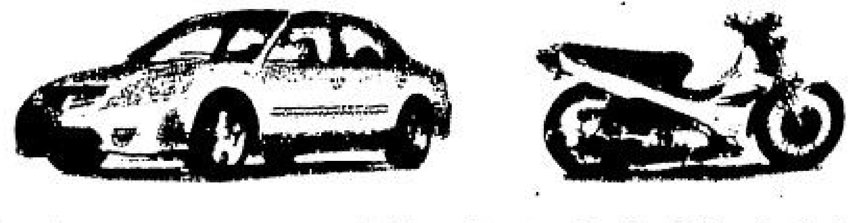

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Palace insists on oil tax

From page A1

reportedly joined the Alliance of Legislators Against Regressive Taxes (Alert), which urges the government to improve tax collection first before imposing new ones.

Alert has allies in the Senate. Both administration and opposition senators have objected to the proposed tax measures, saying that Malacañang should go after tax cheats and plug leaks in revenue collection instead of imposing additional taxes.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said that "unless we address it (the deficit), we'll have a fiscal crisis."

However, Drilon wants the government to first collect taxes more efficiently.

Tremendous leakage

Tax collection is down to about 12 percent of gross domestic product (the value of goods produced and services rendered), one of the lowest in Asia, from about 17 percent in 1997.

"There is tremendous leakage in the system," said Manila-based business consultant Peter Wallace of Wallace Business Forum, who points to rampant evasion both among corporate and individual taxpayers.

While government figures showed there were 6.75 million employees, 3.3 million privately owned motor vehicles and 3 million credit card-holders in the country, only 2.09 million people filed their tax returns in 2002, he said.

He estimates about P35 billion in income taxes went uncollected that year.

No choice

In an interview, Salceda said: "We might have no choice in this case, except to bite the bullet."

He said the policy choice was to either impose a petroleum tax or increase VAT (value-added tax) rates.

"A VAT increase will impact on the whole range of goods and services affecting both rich and poor, while a petroleum tax is less regressive," Salceda said.

To make the fuel tax palatable, Salceda is claiming that it is not exactly antipoor.

He said his study found that 96 percent of the country's fuel consumption and transport fares were borne by "families with income above minimum wage."

Salceda was referring to income classes starting with those earning from a low of P60,000 to P79,000 a year to P250,000 and above.

Lowest pump price

The study also noted that the Philippines had the lowest pump price in peso terms in the region.

It showed that as of Aug. 3, 2004, unleaded gasoline and diesel cost P25.73 and P20.23 per liter, respectively, in the Philippines, much lower than the unleaded gasoline and diesel in Cambodia, which cost P36.25 and P24.65 per liter, respectively.

One of those against a new tax on fuel is Rep. Teodoro Casiño (Bayan Muna), a member of Alert.

"Filipinos have already been battered by seven oil price hikes this year, and more are expected to come as international prices of crude and petroleum products soar to record highs," he said.

The tax measures that Casiño was referring to were Executive Order No. 336 and HB 1323. EO 336, which was signed by Ms Arroyo days before the 13th Congress opened, raised oil tariffs from 3 to 5 percent.

"Once implemented, these oil tax measures will raise domestic pump prices by at least P2 per liter," Casiño said. "Both adjustments will be borne by consumers, not the oil companies."

Deregulation law

Anakpawis Representatives Rafael Mariano and Crispin Beltran have filed House Bill No. 1065, which seeks the repeal of Republic Act No. 8479, or The Downstream Oil Deregulation Act of 1998.

"One of the solutions to an impending oil crisis is to return the regulatory powers of the government to the oil industry," Mariano said.

He noted that eight years after the oil industry was deregulated, oil prices increased at least 60 times and "appears unstoppable."

"Oil companies habitually use the increase in prices of crude in the world market, peso devaluation, the decrease in world oil production and the conflicts in the Middle East as justification to arbitrarily raise their prices," Mariano said. *With a report from AFP*

High oil prices threaten Asian economic growth

From page A1

slump in regional stock markets and prompting economists to draw up scenarios based on prices breaching $50 a barrel.

"If energy prices come back down to what we think supply and demand should have them right now, probably around $30 a barrel, it's not a big deal," David Wyss, chief global economist at US credit rating firm Standard and Poor's, told reporters in Singapore.

"If they stay where they are now, it's a minor problem. But if they go up to $70-$80 a barrel, then you have got some real problems in Asia and everywhere else too."

Joseph Tan, an economist with Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore, said the "big question" was how long oil prices would stay between $42-$50 a barrel.

If prices stayed between these levels for most of the year, then this would impact on Asian growth. But Tan added prices would likely ease in the next few months.

He also pointed out any impact "will not be homogeneous given that some countries are more dependent on oil than others," with South Korea, India and Thailand among the most vulnerable.

Ifzal Ali, chief economist of the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB), said the bank's economists recently went back to the drawing board to plot a scenario in which world oil prices reached $50 a barrel.

An ADB study in June on the impact of high oil prices on Asia had assumed levels of up to $40 a barrel.

High oil prices are now a "serious threat not only to Asia but globally as well," Ali told Agence France-Presse by telephone.

Impact on growth

"The thing is if this increase in oil prices is combined with an increase in interest rates, that would be even more damaging," he said, referring to moves by the US Federal Reserve to raise key interest rates.

Oil prices at $50 a barrel could shave off 1.1 percentage points from Asia's projected gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2005, compared with 0.8 percent if prices remained at $40 a barrel, Ali said.

China's GDP would be trimmed by 1.1 percentage points and India's 1.2 percentage points, compared with 0.8 percent for both countries if prices were at $40 a barrel.

At $50 a barrel, Asia's trade balance by end 2005 would deteriorate 0.9 percentage points and inflation would rise by 1.9 percentage points.

Oil-importing Southeast Asian nations would also be in the line of fire.

For example, the Philippines' GDP would shed 2.6 percentage points if oil prices reached $50 a barrel, inflation would rise 2.7 percentage points and the trade balance would worsen by 2.1 percentage points.

Still, the Philippine government is confident it would achieve its GDP growth target of 4.9 to 5.8 percent this year.

But inflation rose sharply to its highest level in nearly three years in the year through July, fueled by faster rises in prices of fuel and transport services. The central bank is likewise under pressure to tighten monetary policy.

The jump in inflation to 6.0 percent from 5.1 percent in June prompted the government on Thursday to say it could breach its average inflation target of 5 percent for the year, although the central bank said it was still certain of meeting the target.

Thailand's GDP would lose 3.1 percentage points, inflation would increase 2.8 percentage points and trade would worsen by 2.6 percentage points, according to the ADB.

Unsustainable

But Standard Chartered's Tan said he believed current high oil prices would not be sustained because this was being caused chiefly by the financial problems of Russian oil giant Yukos, which produces more oil than Libya, a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Fears that Yukos will shut down its 1.7 million barrels a day production due to a tax dispute with the Russian government sent oil prices soaring to its highs last week.

Julian Jessop, chief international economist of London-based research house Capital Economics, said he believed Yukos and Moscow were playing a game of "brinkmanship" and Russian authorities were unlikely to stop production. *Reports from AFP and Reuters*

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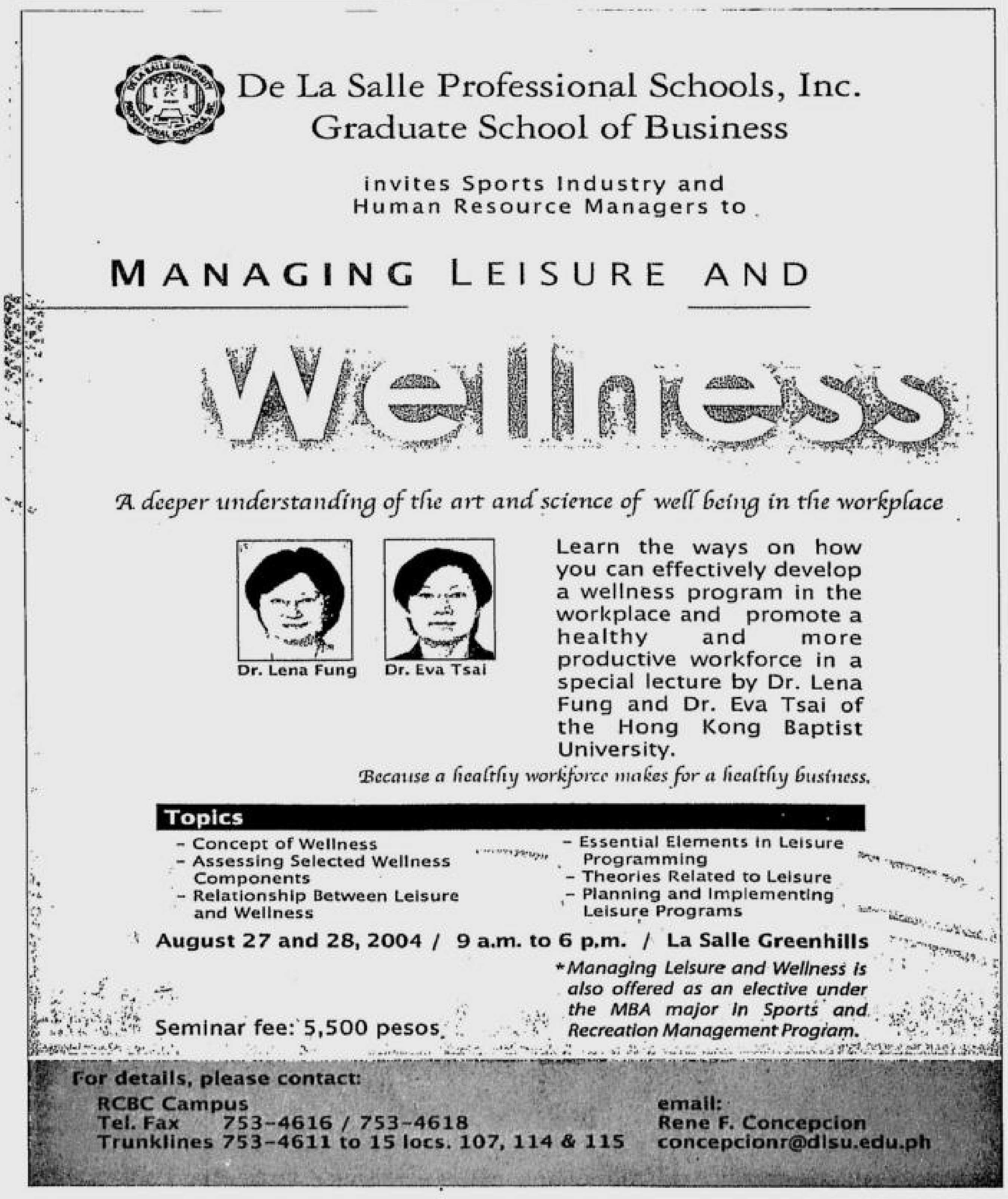
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Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
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"A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HER EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO ON THE APPOINTMENT OF NFA ADMINISTRATOR ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP AS SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE."

WHEREAS, we the Confederation of Grains Retailers in Misamis Oriental support Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in appointing NFA Administrator Atty. Arthur C. Yap as the new Secretary of the Department of Agriculture;

WHEREAS, during his 2-year stewardship as NFA Administrator, the agency was able to support the farmers in keeping a stable supply and fair price for palay. This commitment has continually protected and likewise maintained the interest of the consuming public;

WHEREAS, as a pro-farmer Administrator, he has implemented various programs in uplifting the interest of the agricultural sector through empowerment of the Filipino farmers and providing them additional income;

WHEREAS, being an entrepreneur, he has the capacity to enhance the capability of the agricultural sector by developing the farmer as entrepreneur thereby making the country not only self-sufficient in agricultural commodities but globally competitive in the world market;

NOW THEREFORE, it is resolved that we, the Confederation of Grains Retailers of Misamis Oriental, strongly support the appointment of NFA Administrator Atty. Arthur C. Yap as DA Secretary;

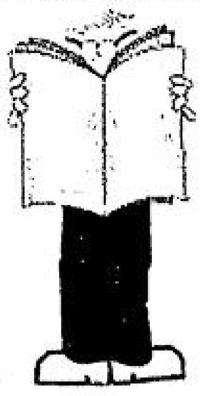
RESOLVED finally that copy of this Resolution be furnished to HER EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO, Manila, Philippines, Administrator Atty. Arthur C. Yap, National Food Authority, Quezon City.

Adopted and approved unanimously on July 12, 2004 at Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

ATTESTED:
(Sgd.) TEODORA A. RODRIGUEZ
Secretary

APPROVED:
(Sgd.) HELEN M. OSIN
President

(PDI – August 9, 2004)



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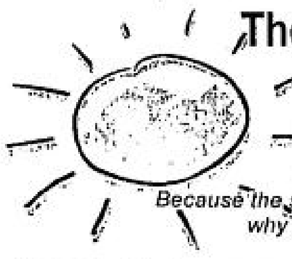

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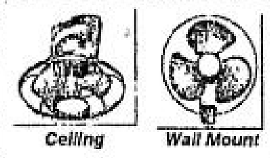

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PETPlans @ 16: A Reliable Partner in Securing Your Future

Adrian V. Ocampo, founder and now Chairman of PETPlans, Inc., established the company in August 1988 when he was already 50 years old. But for Mr. Ocampo, it was just at the right time to venture into the pre-need industry.

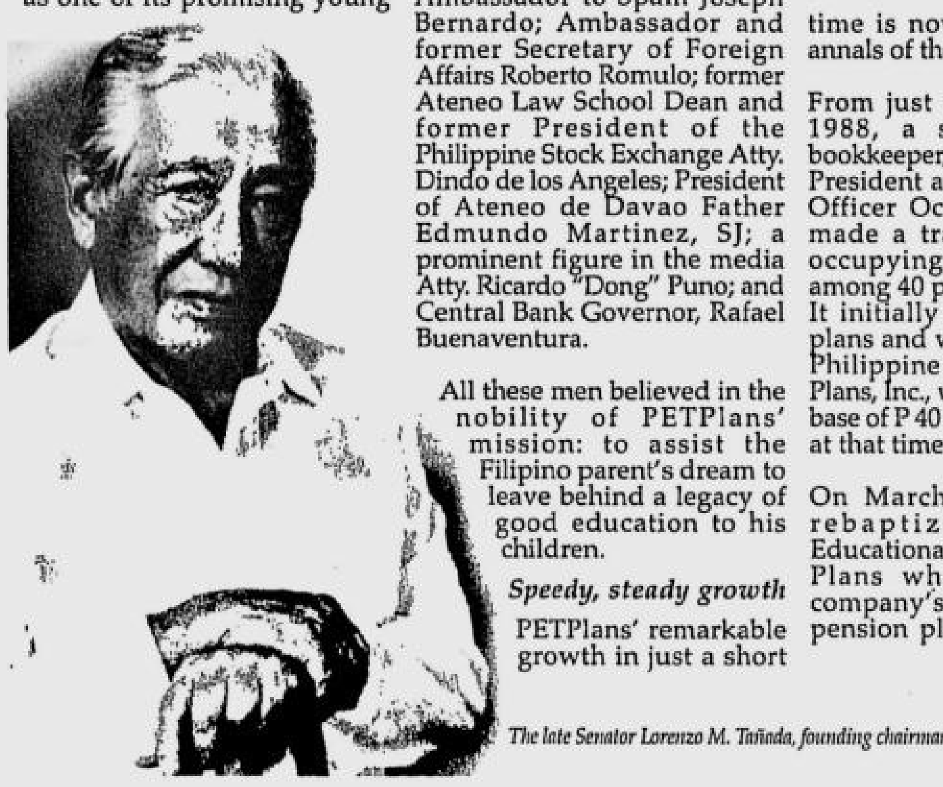
"I gave myself a goal to accomplish enough to retire from the corporate world at 40. But, I kept on working and suddenly I realized I was already 50. *Pakiramdam ko bata pa ako.* Being bred in the insurance industry, my next step was into the fairly young field of the pre-need industry,"Mr. Ocampo says.

Coming home in his mid-twenties with an MBA from New York University, Mr. Ocampo's first job was with Philam Life Insurance Company where he worked closely with its vice-president Rodrigo delos Reyes and insurance icon Earl Carroll. Not long after, he quit as one of its promising young executives to run his own insurance agency which grew to be a dynamic life and non-life brokerage. On the side, he became an entrepreneur exporting doors and knockdown furniture mainly to Japan and dabbled into the lucrative real estate opportunities where his company built and sold houses to middle-income families. Wearing different hats in various fields provided the experience that greatly contributed to his success in the industry.

"Our first chairman – the late Senator Lorenzo Tañada – immediately agreed to be chairman for PETPlans when I asked him. He believed in the vision of the company to provide education for our youth. I was grateful for his confidence and trust in me and in the goals of the company," he says.

Other founding board members included the former Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee; Ambassador to Spain Joseph Bernardo; Ambassador and former Secretary of Foreign Affairs Roberto Romulo; former Ateneo Law School Dean and former President of the Philippine Stock Exchange Atty. Dindo de los Angeles; President of Ateneo de Davao Father Edmundo Martinez, SJ; a prominent figure in the media Atty. Ricardo "Dong" Puno; and Central Bank Governor, Rafael Buenaventura.

All these men believed in the nobility of PETPlans' mission: to assist the Filipino parent's dream to leave behind a legacy of good education to his children.


The late Senator Lorenzo M. Tañada, founding chairman

Speedy, steady growth

PETPlans' remarkable growth in just a short time is now recorded in the annals of the pre-need industry.

From just two employees in 1988, a secretary and a bookkeeper, and of course, then President and Chief Executive Officer Ocampo – PETPlans made a trailblazing feat by occupying the fourth place among 40 pre-need companies. It initially offered education plans and was incorporated as Philippine Educational Trust Plans, Inc., with an initial capital base of P 40 million – the highest at that time.

On March 20, 1992 it was rebaptized Philippine Educational Trust and Pension Plans which signaled the company's readiness to offer pension plans to the market.

"Old-fashioned hard work was our weapon during that time. We determined how to capture a share of the market, establish credibility and effectively reach the market with the products and services that we offer," says Chairman Ocampo.

PETPlans opened its first business center in Cebu on April 1, 1989. Now, it has 100 business centers – with over 12,000 active business partners – nationwide, holding a strong presence from Aparri to Basilan.

The company went global in May 1993. Committing itself to serve the OFWs, PETPlans established PET International, Ltd., located at Queens Road, the central district of Hong Kong.

PETPlans is a majority stockholder of PETNET – Western Union which has the largest network in the Philippines with over 3,000 outlets nationwide.

Steps to success

The first move was to invite trustworthy and credible people on board.

Second was to build an extensive network, particularly outside Metro Manila, strengthening its hold on several provincial markets.

The third, and most imperative move is product innovation. As Ocampo says: "We were the first to come up with the hospital income benefit and the first to introduce the immediate money back guarantee." Today, PETPlans has continued its innovative culture by introducing the PET Dollar Pension Plan – the first dollar plan in the pre-need industry. Plus, it only selects such partners as Bank of the Philippine Islands, Equitable PCI Bank, ING Bank and Prudential Bank as trustee banks – to ensure that the investments of the company's planholders are secured and prudently managed.

"PETPlans now boasts of having P2.5 billion in trust funds and P3 billion in assets," says Chief Finance Officer Erlinda M. Henson.

Chairman Ocampo has likewise affirmed PETPlans commitment to their planholders. "PETPlans is stronger than ever. PETPlans is here to stay."

Board of Directors, from left: Adrian V. Ocampo, Chairman & CEO - PETNet - Western Union; Fr. Edmundo M. Martinez S.J., Vice Chairman/President - Ateneo de Davao University; Eduardo D. delos Angeles, Senior Partner - Romulo, Mabanta, Buenaventura, Sayoc & delos Angeles Law Office; Millette T. Ocampo, Director, President - Manila Handicraft & Marketing Corp.; Lorenzo T. Ocampo, Director/President & COO - PETPlans, Inc. ; Beatriz B. Romulo, Director, EVP - International Exchange Bank; Wilfrido E. Sanchez, Director/Financial Tax Consultant - PETPlans, Inc. ; Erlinda M. Henson, Director/CFO - PETPlans, Inc. ; Wigberto E. Tanada, Director/ Former Senator & Congressman; Ambassador Jose C. Ibazeta, Director, Member of the Board - Anscor; Enrique M. Herbosa, Treasurer - PETPlans, Inc., Former President - UCPB

PETPlans' Steady Growth in Good Hands

PETPlans was incorporated on August 8, 1988 with just three people on board - President and CEO Adrian V. Ocampo, a secretary, and a bookkeeper. With sheer determination and grit - not to mention the assistance of men of integrity who were keen on helping the company flourish - PETPlans landed fourth among 40 pre-need companies after just a year in operation.

In the years that followed, it was consistently among the top 10 pre-need companies in the country. Without the backing of foreign insurance giants, PETPlans has stood its ground as a successful, all-Filipino company.

Indeed, former President, and now chairman Adrian V. Ocampo is a tough act to follow. Is his son, Larry, up to the task?

Make no bones about it. Larry T. Ocampo, who was appointed President and Chief Operating Officer in August last year is making a mark on his own.

"I've served as Executive Vice-President of PET Plans for more than a decade; and I can say that I clearly understood all the segments of the business before I became President last year," he says.

Mr. Ocampo has proven that he possesses more than just knowledge. A graduate of Georgetown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, major in Finance, and a former Atenean in high school, the younger Ocampo has initiated major improvements in the management system, as well as achieved significant innovations in the products and services that PETPlans offers. This is not totally unexpected as Mr. Larry Ocampo has spent five years at Unilever Philippines as a Product Head, a position that thrives on innovation, a keen business acumen, and a good understanding of customer needs and preferences.

A major move is getting the Company's business processes ISO 9001:2000-certified, a worldwide quality assessment standard set by suppliers, customers, and the government.

Product innovation is also priority for the new PETPlans President. "Although we can't prevent our competitors from following our footsteps, our strategy of constant innovation ensures that we always have the competitive edge," he says.

Among the products pioneered by PETPlans are the PET Dollar Pension Plan; the daily hospitalization income benefit that gives cash while the planholder is confined to a hospital; and the money-back guarantee, which is given right after the beneficiary's graduation. PETPlans is also the first, and so far the only, pre-need company that has a tie-up with the Department of Education - allowing it to offer its products to teachers and even to the non-teaching staff. PETPlans is also authorized to sell its plans to the military personnel. The payment for the plans will be done through the convenience of monthly salary deductions.

Having achieved all these after only a year as President, the younger Ocampo's personal management style and leadership can be credited for the successes that PETPlans is enjoying right now. Of particular significance is the collective effort that each of the employees contribute towards the fulfillment of the company's goals under his leadership.

"I strongly believe in team effort. I appreciate individual performance. I like crafting plans but I can also find time to listen to subordinates. I keep a close eye on the process as well as the product; I prefer strategic planning. I may have an overly optimistic vision of my team's collaboration and cooperation without building tangible benefits for all parties for their unselfishness or understanding. I strongly disdain turf-protection and cliques." adds Ocampo.

An innovator. A hands-on president. A team builder. A listening leader. Larry T. Ocampo is all that, and more. He can be given credit for major developments for PETPlans in just a short time. Expect more.

Continuing the legacy. Chairman Adrian V. Ocampo gives pointers to newly-appointed President and COO Larry T. Ocampo.

Laying Out Grand Plans

Whether it's planning to introduce new and innovative products or just discussing internal issues, what is certain is that the Management Team, headed by its dynamic President and COO Larry T. Ocampo, does not let a day pass without the members communicating - whether in person, via e-mail or over the phone. He makes sure that through these, each member of the team gets involved and contributes to the company's progress and growth.

"Teamwork is important to the Management; and I think that is one of PETPlans' greatest strengths. What I do, as the captain of the Team, is to encourage each of them to work in partnership with one another. In that way, we get a lot more ideas; and more heads get to introduce more solutions to a problem – if ever there is one," Ocampo says.

Division Heads(clockwise): Erlinda M. Henson (Chief Finance Officer); Donally Bringas (FVP – Military/MLM Sales); Alex G. Bella (FVP – IRBD – Industrial Relations & Business Development); Joel Lonzanida (VP – Management Services Group); Theodore P. de Guzman (FVP - Sales); Rolando M. Espino (SVP – Legal & Corporate Affairs Division); Noelito R. Trinidad (FVP – Planholder Services). Not in photo Rafael T. Ocampo (VP – Marketing).

And indeed, their daily collaboration has paid off, as PET Plans remains one of the leaders in the pre-need industry. The company, through its products, has enriched – and continues to improve the lives of the Filipinos.

PETPlans' formula for success seems simple. As Ocampo says: "Our people is the key why PETPlans has made it this far. A dynamic team-oriented environment, challenging projects and innovative ideas are what kept us focused on our objective of being one of the top companies in the pre-need industry. Our guiding philosophy has always been to place our customers and employees first and it is this culture of integrity and cooperation that has made PET Plans a breeding ground for creativity, reliability, and quality.".

"Walang Duda, Lamang Ako sa PETPlans."

At the young age of 27, Anna Christina Ochoa has almost finished paying off two pension plans and is waiting to get an education plan for her one-year-old child. "I want my child to have the same peace of mind that my parents had when I was still in college. I want him to have the freedom to choose whatever college course he wants. I believe in the core value of the pre-need industry – that is, securing your future while you still can," the occupational therapist says. She got this trait from her parents who acquired PET Education Plans for her and her two siblings. "They knew that our future was in good hands. PETPlans banked on the integrity of its Board of Directors. They believed that the names behind PETPlans will do everything to be able to deliver," she shares.

How was her experience with PET Education's services when she was in college? "The people were friendly, and fast! I was always the first one in my group who got her tuition. No hassle at all," says the University of the Philippines-Manila graduate.

Another feature which attracted Anna to the plan is the Money Back Guarantee. "The feature was still not in effect when I graduated from college so I was not able to get it. But my younger sister, who graduated last year, was so ecstatic when she got 100% of what my parents paid for her education plan years ago," Anna says.

Occupational Therapy, or any college course for that matter, demands a sound financial resource to pay for books, allowance, materials, not to mention laboratory fees. Add to that the dreaded tuition fee, which increases by 15%, every year. Recognizing this, PETPlans has designed a plan that will cover for the yearly 15% increment in tuition fees.

"I had friends who worked to pay for their tuition when I was still in college. But with PET Education, I didn't experience that," she shares.

In fact, Anna recalls, her parents were fairly generous with her allowance in college, as they did not have to think about tuition. As Anna says: "I guess it would be a totally different story if they weren't able to secure an education plan for my siblings and I, early on. *Walang duda, lamang talaga ako sa PETPlans.*"

One of the pioneer planholders, Anna Christina Ochoa.

KEEPING YOU AHEAD WITH QUALITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

At PETPlans, the stability of the planholders' finances is its major concern. Chairman Adrian V. Ocampo assures: "We're here to stay and serve the last policyholder."

The 100% Filipino-owned company is focused on a mission: to improve the quality of life of the Filipino by providing products and services that would secure his future. Now on its 16th year, PET Plans has never wavered in its objective.

PET Education
A good education is the best legacy that parents can give their children, and PET Education makes sure that parents can provide it. With this in mind, PET Education has created flexible savings schemes payable in easy payment terms.

Major benefits, include:
- *Money Back Guarantee* – Gives the Planholder 100% of the Gross Contact Price (GCP) upon completion of the education program, whether the scholar finishes school or not. Available in Elite 100 plan.
- *Academic Excellence Award* – Summa Cum Laude graduates receive cash awards equivalent to 100% refund from the plan, while Magna Cum Laude graduates receive cash refunds equivalent to 50% from the plan. For high school, the Valedictorian gets to receive cash benefits equivalent to 100% refund from the plan as well. Available in both Elite and Elite 100 plans.
- Hedge against yearly tuition fee hikes. PETPlans' education benefits increase by 15% yearly.

Also included are standard insurance benefits:
- *Group Credit Life Insurance Benefit*. Payment for the remaining balance is waived if the Planholder dies anytime during the paying period.
- *Group Yearly Renewable Term Insurance.* If the Planholder dies anytime during the paying period, his beneficiaries shall receive an amount equivalent to 100% of the Gross Contract Price (GCP).
- *Accidental Death Benefit.* If the cause of death is accidental in nature, beneficiaries shall receive an additional amount equivalent to 100% of the Gross Contract Price (GCP).
- *Waiver of Installments Due to Disability*

Additional benefits:
- *Extended Group Yearly Renewable Term Insurance.* If the Planholder dies anytime between the full payment and availment of the plan, his beneficiaries shall receive an amount equivalent to 100% of the Gross Contract Price (GCP).
- *Daily Hospital Income Benefit.* A maximum daily benefit of up to P3,000/day

PET Pension
Aside from PET Pension Plan's benefits laden and systematic savings scheme, the Planholder is also assured of a money back guarantee equivalent to the plan's Gross Contract Price (GCP). It is a retirement, health, and insurance program in one package!

As a PET Pension Planholder, you get:
- Plan that is automatically paid in full in case of death. Plus, the beneficiary receives an amount equivalent to the Plan's Gross Contract Price (GCP).
- Beneficiary receives an amount equivalent to the Gross Contract Price (GCP), or P500,000, whichever is lower – in case of death.
- Installments are automatically waived in case of disability
- *Loan Assistance Program* allows planholders to borrow cash for other financial needs
- *Daily Hospitalization Income Benefit (DHIB)* gives out cash when the planholder is confined to the hospital
- *Transferability*

PET Life
Major benefits include:
- *Availability of funds* for immediate memorial services
- *Additional funds* equivalent to 100% of the plan value available as life services benefit
- *Insurance protection* of up to 100% of the plan value if cause of death is accidental (covered within the payment period)
- *Daily Hospital Income Benefit (DHIB)* within the payment period
- *Cash conversion* for unrendered services
- One year after full payment, the plan's total amount of benefit increases by 10% of the plan value
- *Longevity Bonus.* PETPlans is the first and only company to offer this unique benefit, a LIVING benefit. If the Planholder lives beyond 20 years from the date of full payment of the plan, he shall receive a bonus equivalent to 100% of the plan value.
- *Transferability*
- *Assignable benefits.* A Planholder may assign his rights and privileges at any given time to a deceased third party one year after the full payment.
- *Free professional administration of service.* PETPlans has a 24-hour call-in facility, which means that the company's life plan administrators can render excellent service immediately upon notice. PETPlans has also established strong business relationships with 257 mortuaries nationwide.

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063

The year 2003 saw the elevation of PETPlans, Inc. into a world-class company by passing the most rigid quality assessment standard in the world, the *ISO Certification.*

By submitting 30 of its core business processes to the stringent scrutiny of the ISO, PETPlans has clearly demonstrated its commitment to provide superior products and services for its planholders. And by getting the nod of the worldwide standard – PETPlans eventually became the most comprehensively certified pre-need company with its ISO 9001:2000 certification – PETPlans bolsters its drive to transform into a globally competitive organization as it is today.

Truly, this passion for excellence is in keeping with the standard of the customers it has pledged to serve – the Filipino people.

Dollar Pension: A First in the Pre-Need Industry

Heading the list of PETPlans' innovative products designed to help create a more stable future for the Filipino is the PET Dollar Pension Plan.

In these uncertain times, the PET Dollar Pension Plan gives its planholders the best hedge against devaluation since the investment is made in dollars, a currency historically stronger than the peso.

A first in the pre-need industry, PET Dollar Pension Plan is ideal for Overseas Filipino Workers who are looking for a facility to invest their hard-earned dollars in; and for other Filipinos looking for a stable investment.

Since the plan is *"participative"* in nature, it credits dividend earnings based on the performance of the trust fund. It comes in three variants: PET $ Gold, which comes with a cash allowance of up to 20% of the maturity value at the end of the 10th to the 14th year, and with a full maturity value on the 15th year; PET $ 10, a 10-year maturity plan; and PET $ 15, which provides maturity benefits at the end of the 15th year or on the maturity period.

Affordability is another feature of the product. With a low minimum investment of $276, it gives a higher rate of return than a bank time deposit does. Plus, the PET Dollar Pension Plan is a single payment plan – which means that there's no need for succeeding payments!

Added benefits:

- *Optional Support Fund.* The planholder's family or his legitimate beneficiaries get a portion of the maturity value, in advance, in case of the planholder's untimely demise.
- *Pension Loan Assistance*
- *Transferability*
- *Dividend earnings*

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- **Over 100 business centers nationwide**
- **More than 12,000 active business partners**
- **ISO 9001:2000 certified**
- **A Board of Directors composed of trusted leaders in business, public service, banking and education**

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MOTHER AND CHILD AP
A four-day-old American flamingo chick peeks out from its mother's feathers to feed at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, July 20. Flamingo parents, which share the responsibilities of raising their young, produce a liquid in their digestive system that nourishes the chicks.

Eminent Australians slam Howard gov't over Iraq war

CANBERRA, Australia—Former defense chiefs and diplomats Sunday condemned Australia's involvement in the Iraq war in what could be a major blow to Prime Minister John Howard's reelection prospects.

The 43 eminent Australians including two former chiefs of defense and three ambassadors issued a scathing public statement accusing the government of deceit and rubber-stamping foreign policies decided by Washington.

"We are concerned that Australia was committed to join the invasion of Iraq on the basis of false assumptions and the deception of the Australian people," the statement said. "Above all, it is wrong and dangerous for our elected representatives to mislead the Australian people."

The statement comes as some commentators predict Howard this week will call for elections to be held Sept. 18. Opinion polls predict the election will be too close to call, but have suggested the Iraq war will be a major issue with up to 75 percent of voters believing the invasion was not justified.

Howard, who hopes for a fourth three-year term as prime minister, denied the government misrepresented intelligence about Iraq's weapons programs and had pressured spy agencies into bolstering a case for war.

"The argument that we took the country to war based on a lie is itself a misrepresentation and I continue to reject it," Howard said in Samoa where he attended a Pacific leaders' forum.

Howard had cited Iraq's weapons of mass destruction—which have never been found—as the main reason for war.

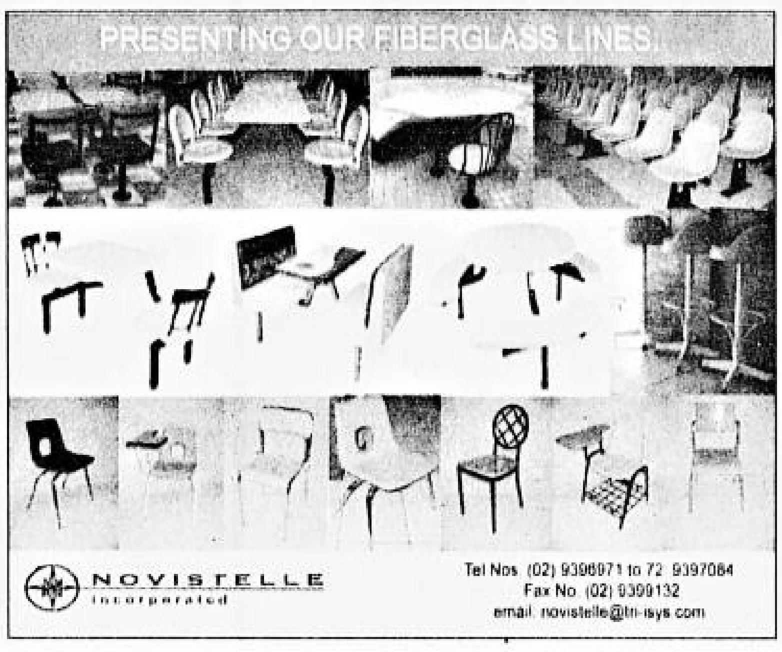
Opposition Labor Party leader Mark Latham promised honesty if elected prime minister.

"It is very, very important to ensure on those big questions in the war against terror you are honest with the Australian people and you are getting the policy right ... to make the country more secure, not less secure," he told Australian Boadcasting Corp. "Mr. Howard has an appalling record."

Labor has also suggested that Australia's involvement in Iraq has raised its profile as a terrorist target. The government rejects the allegation.

Howard's decision to commit 2,000 troops to the Iraq invasion sparked the biggest peace protests in Australia since the Vietnam War.

Australia still has nearly 900 troops in and around Iraq, and their deployment is likely to become a key election issue, with Howard saying they must remain there as long as they are needed and Latham vowing to bring some home by Christmas if he wins power. *AP*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Iraq invasion 'tremendous gift' to Bin Laden, says CIA analyst

WASHINGTON—The US invasion of Iraq was a "tremendous gift" to Osama bin Laden and a major setback in the struggle against al-Qaida, according to a CIA terrorism expert who has written a scathing account of the conduct of the US "war on terror."

In an interview with AFP, the author of "Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror" blasted the efforts of successive US governments and the US intelligence community in fighting what he describes as a global Islamic insurgency.

"Anonymous," as he is known, painted a dismal picture of the situation in Iraq, a "very bleak" outlook for Afghanistan and advocated debate about US policies which he claimed are providing a fertile recruiting ground for al-Qaida in the Muslim world.

A senior CIA analyst, "Anonymous" has been widely identified as the head of the Bin Laden unit at the Central Intelligence Agency's Counterterrorist Center from 1996 to 1999. He was allowed to write the book on condition he not reveal his identity.

Published last month with an initial print run of 10,000 copies the provocative work, which was vetted by his employer for classified material, has climbed to No. 5 on the New York Times list of non-fiction best-sellers.

It has gone back to the printers for another 200,000 copies and translations into nearly a dozen languages are planned. They include Arabic, French, Greek, Japanese and Turkish.

"Anonymous," a bearded, professorial man in his 50s, is blistering in his criticism of the US decision to invade Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein.

"It's a disaster," he said. "I'm not an expert at all on Saddam or WMD (weapons of mass destruction) or Iraq but as it factors into the war against al-Qaida or al-Qaidaism it was a tremendous gift to Bin Laden.

"It validated so many of the arguments he's made over the past decade," "Anonymous" said, particularly the claim by the Saudi-born al-Qaida leader that the West seeks to occupy the Islamic holy places. *AFP*

Iranian envoy seized in Iraq

TEHRAN—The Iranian Embassy in Baghdad has confirmed that one of its diplomats there has been kidnapped, state television said Sunday.

It said Fereydun Jahani was kidnapped on Wednesday as he was travelling to the central Iraqi city of Karbala to open an Iranian consulate agreed to by the Iraqi interim government.

The report added that no ransom has been requested.

An Iranian foreign ministry official earlier told AFP that authorities were investigating the reported kidnapping.

"We cannot yet confirm it or deny it. We are looking into the matter," said the official.

A group calling itself the Islamic Army in Iraq announced Sunday it has "detained" Jahani for "stirring sectarian strife and for activities outside his diplomatic duties," Dubai-based Al-Arabiya television reported. *AFP*

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Pakistan bags another top al-Qaida operative

ISLAMABAD—A senior al-Qaida operative who knew Osama bin Laden and was linked to assassination attempts on Pakistan's president has been arrested in Dubai and handed over to Islamabad, Pakistani intelligence sources said on Saturday.

Qari Saifullah Akhtar, a leader of the radical Islamic group Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami, was arrested by authorities in Dubai on Friday after Pakistan had requested his detention, and handed over to Islamabad on Saturday.

The capture was the latest breakthrough in a broadening offensive against terrorist groups in Pakistan that has netted over 20 suspects in recent weeks including computer engineer Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan and top al-Qaida figure Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani.

One intelligence source said Khan e-mailed al-Qaida comrades while in custody as part of a sting by security agencies, but his name appeared in US newspapers, which may have compromised the operation, according to experts.

Ghailani had a multimillion-dollar bounty on his head for his alleged role in the 1998 East African US Embassy bombings.

Information gleaned from Khan led to the arrest of 12 al-Qaida suspects in Britain earlier this week and the decision by the United States to put New York and Washington on high alert against possible al-Qaida attacks.

British newspapers said that among the 12 arrested was senior al-Qaida figure Abu Musa al-Hindi or Abu Eisa al-Hindi, and that he was believed to be plotting an attack on Heathrow airport.

In a separate development, Pakistani sources said on Saturday that authorities had arrested Fazal-ur Rehman Khalil, head of the banned Harkat-ul-Mujahideen group linked to an insurgency against Indian rule in Kashmir, the Afghan Taliban and al-Qaida.

His arrest will be seen as a warning to other leaders of banned radical Islamic outfits that have re-emerged under new names. Some are sectarian, but several have links to al-Qaida.

Pakistan's intelligence services used information gleaned from a spate of high-profile arrests of al-Qaida members in recent weeks, including those of Khan and Ghailani, to track down Akhtar, described by a source as "an operational head of al-Qaida in Pakistan." He was with al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar in Afghanistan at the time of the US-led war against the hardline Islamic militia late in 2001 and fled first to Saudi Arabia and then to United Arab Emirates. *Reuters*

Experts: US made security blunder in unmasking mole within al-Qaida

LONDON—The revelation that a mole within al-Qaida was exposed after Washington launched its "orange alert" this month has shocked security experts, who say the outing of the source may have set back the war on terror.

Reuters learned from Pakistani intelligence sources on Friday that computer expert Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan, arrested secretly in July, was working under cover to help the authorities track down al-Qaida militants in Britain and the United States when his name appeared in US newspapers.

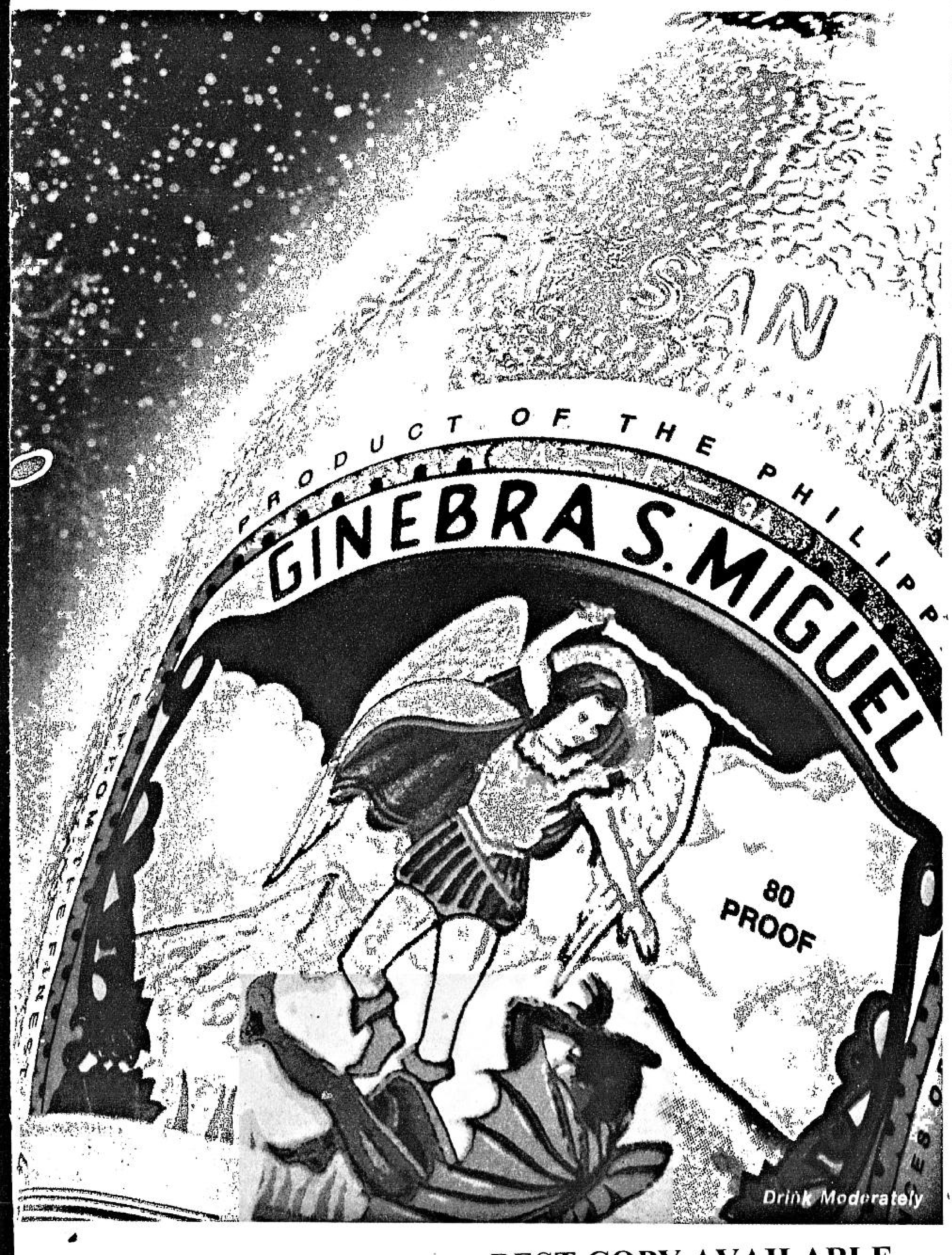
"After his capture he admitted being an al-Qaida member and agreed to send e-mails to his contacts," a Pakistani intelligence source told Reuters. "He sent encoded e-mails and received encoded replies. He's a great hacker and even the US agents said he was a computer whiz."

Last Sunday, US officials told reporters that someone held secretly by Pakistan was the source of the bulk of the information justifying the alert. The New York Times obtained Khan's name independently, and US officials confirmed it when it appeared in the paper the next morning.

None of those reports mentioned at the time that Khan had been under cover helping the authorities catch al-Qaida suspects, and that his value in that regard was destroyed by making his name public.

A day later, Britain hastily rounded up terrorism suspects, some of whom are believed to have been in contact with Khan while he was under cover. Washington has portrayed those arrests as a major success, saying one of the suspects, named Abu Musa al-Hindi or Abu Eissa al-Hindi, was a senior al-Qaida figure.

But British police have acknowledged the raids were carried out in a rush. Suspects were dragged out of shops in daylight and caught in a high speed car chase, instead of the usual procedure of catching them at home in the early morning while they can offer less resistance. *Reuters*



WORLDBRIEFS

Confusion over hostages

NEW DELHI—The release of seven truck drivers from India, Kenya and Egypt who were taken hostage in Iraq has been delayed, with their captors making a new demand, a spokesperson for their employer said on Sunday. Rana Abu-Zaineh, a spokesperson for Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport, told Aaj Tak news channel that the company was close to bringing the men back home until late Saturday night when it "received a new demand and we are now discussing it." *AP*

Fake beheading

LOS ANGELES—Benjamin Vanderford, a 22-year-old San Francisco man believed to have been beheaded in Iraq, confirmed Saturday he is alive and well and that he faked his own execution to demonstrate the persuasive powers of the Internet. He told AFP by telephone that he and a friend, Robert Martan, made the video of his decapitation at Martan's home several months ago. The Federal Bureau of Investigation said its agents interviewed Vanderford at his home early Saturday, that he acknowledged perpetrating the hoax, and that an investigation was under way into whether any laws were broken. The FBI said Vanderford was not arrested. "It was a political experiment," Vanderford said, "Also a media experiment. "I, with a friend, Robert Martan, wanted to show the power of the media and the power of Internet. If you can convince one, then the whole thing becomes true. *AFP*

US apologizes

TAIPEI—The United States has apologized to Taiwan after the island's de facto ambassador to Washington was fingerprinted and photographed upon arrival in the country, despite his diplomatic status, an official said Sunday. Newly appointed David Ta Wei Lee was fingerprinted and photographed at Washington's Dulles International Airport last month even after US officials there to meet him explained his status, under which he would normally avoid such a process. *AFP*

Peripatetic Pope

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II makes the 104th foreign visit of his papacy when he flies to the Marian shrine of Lourdes in the French Pyrenees next weekend. It will be his eighth visit to France. So far, his visits have taken in 129 of the world's 191 independent states, many of them more than once. Among the states he significantly did not visit were Russia and China. *AFP*

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Not the solution

EDITORIAL

GLOBAL oil prices are at their highest levels in history. Following their lead, we can expect prices of the most basic goods and services to go up, too. Is it therefore time to bring back the Oil Price Stabilization Fund?

The answer is No.

Should the government enact a law undoing the deregulation of the local oil industry, giving itself back the power to determine industry prices?

The answer, also, is No.

Many of the arguments raised in favor of greater government involvement in the oil industry are based on the wrong premise: that there is a quick fix to the problem of rising oil prices, and it lies in the hands of the government. Some are based on a misreading of the past: that the OPSF worked in its time, and that the country as a whole was better off. At least one argument—that offered by militant leftists—is based on a fundamental inconsistency: the same groups that want less government in our lives want more of it in oil, to ensure lower prices.

But the analytical consensus in the oil industry is bleak: We should expect oil prices to remain high in the next 12 to 18 months. The power struggle between Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's government and the Russian oil giant Yukos (which produces 1.6 million barrels per day) is only the most recent uncertainty to unsettle the worldwide oil business.

The Yukos factor adds anywhere from a dollar to two dollars to the price of oil per barrel. The so-called terror premium, however, adds at least five times as much to the unit price. Attacks on the Saudi oil infrastructure, which started in May with a bombing that killed five expatriate workers, have not affected either production or distribution in the world's largest oil producer, but the fear of an imminent disastrous disruption is growing.

"We estimate that the fear factor adds as much as $10 per barrel to the price of oil," says Jim Burkhard, director of Cambridge Energy Research Associates in Boston, Massachusetts.

World demand for oil has risen sharply, driven in large part by China's gas-guzzling economic engine. But new pipelines in other parts of the world, mainly in the former Soviet Union, won't be ready to start pumping for a year or so. War in Iraq, political uncertainty in Venezuela, and unrest in Nigeria have helped tighten supply. That leaves Saudi Arabia, which accounts for about two-thirds of the spare production capacity of the entire Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. But precisely because the world depends on the Saudis to make up for any shortfall in supply, the terrorism factor leaves the oil industry even more vulnerable.

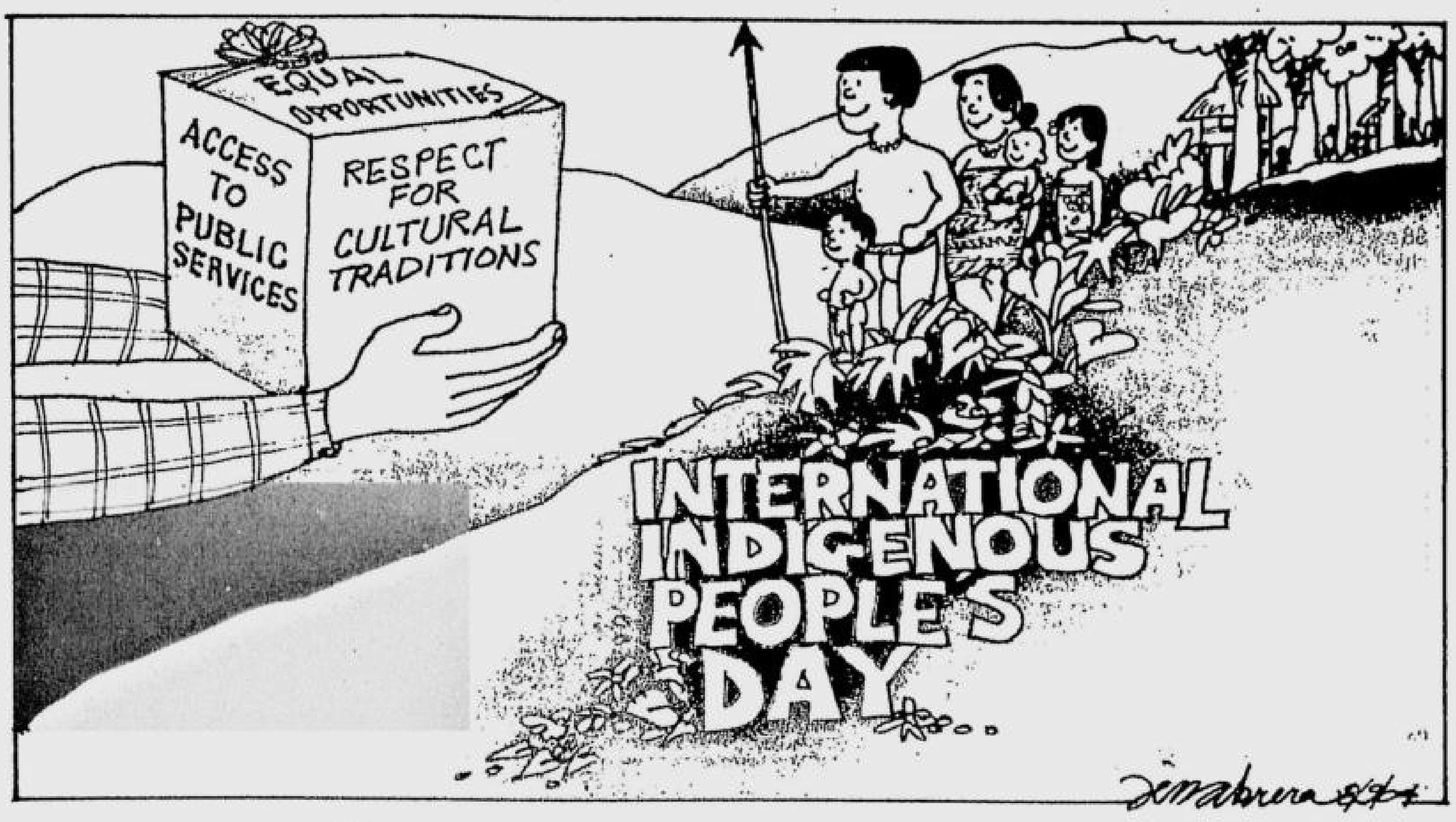
It is in this harsh light that appeals for Malacañang to step in and stop oil price increases have been made.

There is no doubt that the government should help provide what policymakers call a safety net, something to help protect the ordinary consumer from the coming oil shock. The question is: Will subsidizing oil prices provide the right kind of safety net?

The OPSF was essentially a subsidy arrangement. When oil prices rose above the pre-determined level, the oil firms charged the government for the difference. In the short term, the consumer benefited, because the "stabilization" fund absorbed the increase. But in the long term, the public suffered, because the government ended up paying billions of pesos in subsidies, using taxpayer money.

This is an obligation that the government cannot assume again. It cannot do so for a practical reason: It is already laboring under the strain of a P300-billion deficit and a trillion-peso debt overhang. And it cannot do so for a policy reason: The market remains the best way to determine prices; economic experience both here and abroad confirms that government regulation incurs hidden costs, which are invariably passed on to the public. By and large, citizens as consumers are better off when the state leaves the market to do its work.

But when the market's invisible hand comes up short, the long arm of the government must take up the slack. In the present instance, it can cushion the blow by reducing the tax load borne by petroleum products; it can prevent a recurrence by ramping up Malampaya production and sourcing more oil from producers outside the Middle East; it can implement a no-nonsense, fuel-saving campaign. None of these or similar measures are a quick fix, but then again, there is no such thing.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Coco diesel as renewable source of fuel

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE CONTINUED rise in the price of crude oil in the world market and the declining exchange rate of the peso to the dollar are hitting the economy and the pockets of consumers with a double whammy. We cannot do anything with either. We are at the mercy of the law of supply and demand and of world market forces. But we can do something about our dependence on imported oil. We can lessen our dependence on it.

We have other natural resources that we can convert into energy. We are, in fact, already doing this with hydroelectric, geothermal, natural gas and—to a much lesser extent—solar and wind power. We almost had nuclear power but the facility that was to generate it was aborted for political reasons. And now we are paying $155,000 every single day in interest payments for a loan used to construct the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

Now President Macapagal-Arroyo says that the mothballed plant will be converted into a natural gas power plant, using gas from Malampaya in Palawan, but it would need another $600 million to do that, which is enough to build a new power plant.

That is the trouble with big power plants—they cost too much money—money that an almost bankrupt country like us cannot afford. For example, we have the huge Laiban Dam. It would not only generate electricity but also provide water for irrigation and drinking. Its construction was started years ago but had to be stopped because the money for the project ran short.

However, we have plentiful supply of alternative energy that would not cost an arm and a leg to produce. Neighborhood cooperatives can produce it from a raw material that is so abundant and cheap that farmers no longer bother to harvest them. Harvesting them would cost more than the income they would earn from selling them.

I am referring to oil—coconut oil.

Coconut oil is so cheap in the world market that farmers are cutting down their coconut trees and selling them as coco lumber rather than cook the nuts into copra.

Because of the world scare over cholesterol, in which coconut oil is reputed to be rich, consumers turned to other vegetable oils for cooking. That is why the demand for coconut oil and its price plummeted and coconut farmers are losing their shirts. If the demand for coconut oil does not rise soon, the Philippines could also lose its extensive coconut plantations as farmers continue to chop down their coconut trees for coco lumber to earn some money.

The recent increase in the price of crude oil—because of the greed of oil-producing countries—could be a blessing in disguise for the Philippines. Coco diesel can now be produced out of coconut oil. It can replace diesel fuel, which is refined from crude oil. Coco diesel has been proven to be cleaner, non-polluting and better than diesel derived from crude; its price is now competitive with the diesel fuel. As the price of crude rise, that of the coco diesel will eventually become cheaper.

The rise in the price of crude oil is inexorable. The price may bounce up and down along with changes in supply and demand, but the trend has always been upward, since the Arabs nationalized the oil companies in their countries and organized the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the world's oil cartel.

But crude oil is an exhaustible resource. Time will come when the underground deposits of crude oil will run out, and then the Arab countries now lording it over the world with their oil will have no other natural resource left except desert sand and sunlight. Then they will have to run to tropical countries like the Philippines to buy coco diesel for fuel.

And that is the beauty of coco diesel—the supply is inexhaustible. For as long as our coconut plantations thrive, there will be a supply. In the future, the coconut-producing countries can form their own Opec and do to the present members of Opec what they are doing to us now. That would be poetic justice.

If the present crude oil-producing countries have any foresight, they should treat coconut-growing countries—like the Philippines—better by selling us crude oil at discounted rates. When the reversal of roles comes, we will remember their generosity and sell them our coco diesel also at discounted rates.

But before counting our eggs and plotting revenge, we should first lessen our dependence on crude oil by propagating the production and use of coco diesel. I am surprised that our government is not doing this despite the present oil crisis. Aside from putting up a billboard advertising coco diesel in front of its office in Quezon City, the Philippine Coconut Administration (Philcoa) has not done anything much to inform the public about it. For many years, the Philcoa has done little for the coconut industry on which it has fattened itself. It should be one of the do-nothing government agencies that the President should abolish.

I am surprised that the Department of Energy, the National Institute of Science and Technology and the National Science Development Board are not doing enough to propagate coco diesel. I am also surprised that the President did not emphasize this during her speech last Friday, Aug. 6, before the Manila Overseas Press Club when she announced her plans to achieve self-sufficiency in energy.

We should stop the present massacre of coconut trees. Instead of cutting them down, we should plant more.

The best thing about coco diesel is that we don't need big, expensive factories to produce it. The coconut farmers themselves can produce it; thus they will be immediately and directly benefited by it.

Families

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOME years ago, we had a messenger/utility person in the NGO I helped put up. He and his wife and their daughter lived in our office. There was a small room at the back that they occupied. They helped in the upkeep of the place in exchange for room and board.

Our messenger, Leo, was in his mid-20s, while his wife, Ging, was in her early 20s. When we hired Leo, they already had a 2-year-old daughter whom they doted on. Not long afterward, they had another kid, a boy: As it turned out Ging was pregnant at the time they came to us. When their boy was born, the women in our office took time to explain to them the wisdom of limiting their children to only two. Leo's salary was meager by Metro Manila standards, though we paid reasonably good wages. Even with a roof over their heads, courtesy of the office, Leo's salary would not be enough see them through rough times. And the arrangement was fickle, you never knew when the funding would stop, or drop to a trickle, and we would have to move elsewhere.

The couple listened intently and nodded in agreement. A few months later, Ging was pregnant again and, a few more months later, gave birth to another boy. The women in our office who had talked to them were infuriated. It wasn't just because Leo's energies were being depleted taking care of his family, it was that he had become remiss in his office duties. And it wasn't just because their debts, in the form of advances, were piling up. It was also because it seemed a betrayal of trust. The couple was profuse with apologies and said it would not happen again—at least not immediately.

I left the NGO not long after that. True enough, the office did move elsewhere some time later to save on rent, and Leo and family lost a place to stay. The last I spoke to him he was worried about his finances and was wondering how to make both ends meet. He was worried in particular that his wife was pregnant again. By then I, too, had lost sympathy for his plight as it reeked of utter recklessness.

I have still another story to tell, which bears on family planning, or the lack of it. This has to do with still another messenger in an office I worked with in the 1980s.

Ed had previously lived with a woman with whom he had five children. He and the woman had split up and he had eventually found a new partner. His new partner came from a farmer family from Bulacan, which was very traditional. They were wed in church amid much fanfare, rice being thrown plentifully in hopes they would reap a rich harvest. The sentiment was literal: They were expected to raise a brood of kids.

Alas, over the next few months, Ed's wife would not get pregnant. Each time I saw Ed, he looked miserable and felt like he was, well, under the gun. His wife was constantly nagged by her family and berated for not being able to produce an offspring. Their lifestyle and habits were inquired into in obtrusive detail. The prospect of visiting or being visited by Ed's wife's family took on the aspect of the rites of Holy Week.

At length, out of desperation, they consulted a doctor who prescribed fertility pills for Ed's wife and drew a schedule for when mating would be most productive. The arrangement was not without its comic aspects, though Ed wasn't laughing. On the occasions that he joined us for a night out, he would drink only a couple of beers, and then drink Coke and chew gum to disguise its smell. He would then say his goodbyes and rush home because the doctor had prescribed a certain hour that night for the productive mating. Never had making whoopee carried the dimensions of heroism beyond the call of desire. We all wanted to pin the Purple Cross on Ed. We were not sure on which part of his body.

But don't knock it, the thing worked. Not long afterward, Ed announced to us with boundless relief, if not undiluted joy, that his wife was pregnant. Several months later, she gave birth to a baby girl. Then a few months after that, Ed told us his wife was pregnant again, a fact that brought immense happiness to her family they were now doting on her. I asked him how many kids they planned on having. The question seemed the strangest thing to him, he did not know how to answer it. It had no place amid the laughter and celebration.

If these two stories show anything, it is the complexity of the problem of family planning, or population control. I did not tell these stories to suggest the impossibility of restricting the size of this country's population, I told them to suggest the extent of what needs to be hurdled for it to happen. It's not just a question of "to condom" or "not to condom," which was how the problem got to be framed many years ago, during Ramos' time, when Jaime Cardinal Sin took issue with then Health Secretary Juan Flavier's policy of "Let's Doh it," the "do" there having to do with wearing condoms while doing it. That is to say, it's not just a question of making contraceptives abundantly accessible, or defying the Catholic Church's notion of the Divine Will being manifested by hordes of the faithful overrunning the planet.

It's a question of culture and motivation, too. Contraceptives mean nothing if couples do not want to use them anyway. And the circumvention of the Church means nothing if couples do not have to be cajoled into wanting to produce babies anyway. The motivation to produce babies plentifully in this country, particularly among the poor, is obdurate. It is a driving force. That is what has to be addressed primarily, not just the Church's objections to family planning and the lack of state support for it. The equation is not, "If there's a way, there's a will," it is, "Where there's a will, there's a way."

But that's a discussion best left for tomorrow.

Mercy missions can be done here

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN A RADIO program co-hosted by Cecile Alvarez and me, Sec. Romulo Neri of the National Economic and Development Authority discussed how the national budget pie is cut four ways: 33 percent goes to debt service (a major item is the huge payment for the Bataan nuclear plant loans), 35 percent to government personnel salaries, 20 percent to the Internal Revenue Allotment for local governments—for a total of 88 percent. The remaining 12 percent goes to operating and capital expenditures, such as the construction of roads, hospitals, schools, etc.

That presentation drew a response from Sen. Joker Arroyo, who noted that Neri's thesis on the 88 percent belies the allegation made by the Neda chief himself, the World Bank and "other kibitzers" that corruption in government eats up as much as 30 percent of the budget. Arroyo argued that the 88 percent spent on debt service, salaries and IRA are "practically graft-free" because there are no contracts involved to "implement them." He noted that "Anomalies rise where there are contracts," and since contracts are de rigueur for capital expenditures, it's there where corruption can be found.

* * *

Arroyo therefore noted that the 30 percent lost on corruption can only be on the 12 percent of the appropriation for capital expenditures. This means that only 3.6 percent of the budget is lost to corruption—not 30 percent of entire budget, as Neri used to point out. In actual figures, out of the proposed 2005 budget of P900 billion, P33 billion of the allotment for expenditures could be lost to corruption.

Arroyo stressed that while "so much mistaken emphasis" is being given on the P33 billion, the corruption on the revenue side, "which is more alarming" is completely being overlooked.

* * *

Assuming, he said, that what's due the government is P700 billion in revenues; if 10 percent of this is not collected because of corruption, this means, the government loses P70 billion; at 15 percent uncollected tax, that's P105 billion. Thus, Arroyo argues, government's "corruption loss" in capital expenditures (P33 billion) is "not as bad" as in tax collection, which could reach as high as 70 billion to P105 billion.

* * *

Arroyo also noted that Sen. Ralph Recto has been talking about this in budget hearings, but fiscal, economic and monetary officials have not been paying attention. But this time, he said, both chambers of Congress are poised to talk about the serious problems in the government's tax collection efforts, before discussing any tax proposal.

In other words, what the lawmakers are asking the executive department is to demonstrate that it's doing everything it could to raise the revenue collection first and to clean up the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, before Congress starts acting on the proposed tax measures.

* * *

The entire Filipino nation is grateful to the surgical team at Montefiore Hospital in New York, led by Dr. James Goodrich, for its fine surgical separation of conjoined Filipino twins Carl and Clarence Aguirre. The initial work-up tests were done by a Filipino doctor named Willy Lopez, a co-resident of Goodrich in the US, in collaboration with the Philippine General Hospital, Makati Medical Center and Cardinal Santos Hospital. The mercy mission for these twins was brought to the attention of the PAL Foundation, which made the arrangements and coordination between the Aguirres and US NGOs that came to their succor.

* * *

Last Saturday, however, I wrote that Filipino doctors have the expertise to separate Siamese twins. The PGH team alone, which has a pool of about 27 doctors, has actually operated on 11 cases of conjoined twins, nine of which were quite successful, including one case involving twins conjoined on one side of their heads. A Medical Center Manila team, led by Dr. Eduardo Mercado, did a similar feat, also on conjoined twins attached at the heads, just like the Aguirres, and one of them survived; he is now in his teens and well.

* * *

But while we have the medical expertise here, the problem is funding; the doctors have to scrounge around for funds to operate on Filipino Siamese twins, and from reports, our local doctors have had to operate under far less ideal conditions. PGH's department of surgery chair Dr. Josefina Almonte said that such an operation at PGH could cost only P500,000, which is nothing compared with the $2 million estimated cost for the Aguirre operation and rehabilitation (does not include US doctors' fees which are being donated). But even that amount (P500,000), the PGH can hardly raise. This is indeed a shame.

The Aguirre twins' plight might soon expose other conjoined patients needing attention in this country. To repeat the Aguirre's case in the US East Coast, whereby all expenses were shouldered by donor institutions and individuals, may not be that easy to come by once again. But perhaps some legislators could pool a portion of their CDF to raise funds for PGH's surgical expenses for such operations and to upgrade much-needed hospital facilities.

* * *

Dr. Camella Posoncuy wrote to correct the impression that she was the leader of the PGH team that operated on the Rasco Siamese twins, who were conjoined on a side of their heads. She said there were four surgeons in the team: Dr. Victor Reyes, Dr. Faustino Domingo and herself, neurosurgeons; and Dr. Florencio Lucero, plastic and reconstruction surgeon; assisting them were anesthesiologists Iluminada Camagay and Merle C. Odi. Dr. Posoncuy also noted that the separation of twins joined at the spine was also a combined team effort of at least eight specialists.

Final word on the Tasaday?

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

"INVENTED Eden" is the apt title of a book released only last year by the American publishing house Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. It is written by the award-winning author Robin Hemley. The book's subtitle—The Elusive, Disputed History of the Tasaday—even makes it more intriguing.

In 1971, a band of twenty-six "Stone Age" rainforest dwellers was discovered deep in what was then the vastly isolated jungles of southern Cotabato. The discoverer, Manuel "Manda" Elizalde, was the wrong person at the wrong time. Reputed as a spoiled rich kid with a mercurial temper, who squandered fortunes on booze and women, Elizalde was closely identified as one of the fair-haired boys of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos.

Soon after, the skeptics came out. As incredible as the myths that Marcos spun around his persona, the Tasaday story soon came to be doubted as a conspiratorial fiction meant to add credit to the Marcos government, and later to boost the political stock of Elizalde whom the Marcos couple recruited into their Senate slate within less than two months after the discovery.

But just as the heat started to rise—thanks to the fable created by nightly American newscasts and the glossy cover of the National Geographic—Marcos declared the closure to all visitors of the 45,000-acre Tasaday Reserve. It was only after twelve years into the post-Edsa era did the Tasaday resurface, and with it the sordid tales of clever gimmickry orchestrated by Elizalde. The "anthropological find of the century" became the "greatest hoax of the century."

The acrimonious debates and accusations over the controversy at various international conferences failed to hammer a final, definitive answer to the question: Was it truly a hoax?

Is there a need to answer that question today? Absolutely. For in the center of it all is a group of very poor people who, as Hemley puts it, "have been buffeted by forces beyond their control." Does Hemly's book finally put closure to this protracted controversy?

Hemley's objective account is filled with riveting tales emerging from investigations that included all the personalities in both sides of the controversy and two visits to the Tasaday territory. The visits brought Hemly face-to-face with some of the surviving Tasadays. His final conclusion—which he gives only at the closing paragraphs of the final chapter—are as revealing as the weaknesses that he exposes in the positions of the "believers" and "doubters" of the hoax.

It was true, after all, that Elizalde and his Panamin staff would smuggle in rice to the Tasadays after the visitors had left. It was true that Elizalde had suggested to the Tasadays that they wear leaves instead of clothing. Manda became over-protective of the Tasadays. In his purist thinking, he had thought that the Tasadays must remain "untouched" by modern civilization. Wary of scientific investigators, Manda limited access to the Tasaday territory. Independent anthropologists had no way to validate findings. Was he hiding something? Manda's first mistakes unwittingly created the doubts that gave rise to the accusations that the Tasaday story was a hoax.

On the other hand, the doubters, many of whom were top-notch, Manila-based academicians, were themselves not without faults. Many of them had never set foot on Tasaday territory even after the Marcoses—and Manda's exile in Central America and his subsequent death in Manila—had long been out of power. Nevertheless, a good number of them at least analyzed the issue from the confines of their armchairs. But no anthropologist can ever make ethnographic analysis without fieldwork, something that Bronislaw Malinowski had long taught.

The Tasaday was and is an issue that has to be closely associated with Marcos and all the dubiousness that association conjures up in our minds. Anything that Marcos touched was suspect. This was the line of the doubters. They missed, as they did, the forest for the trees; so that when top-notch anthropologists made a careful ethnolinguistic assessment of the Tasaday language, their findings were rejected outright.

And so, even as it was found that the Tasaday dialect was akin to the nearest Manobo group's language, suggesting a significant chronological separation, the discovery was not accepted as genuine. The Tasadays were merely T'boli, who were made to pose by Elizalde. But the T'boli language was not even a remote kin of the Manobo's. True, one Tasaday woman later became fluent in T'boli, but the doubters failed to see that she had married a T'boli. Pictures of the alleged T'boli poseurs were later gathered by the doubters and shown to the Tasadays, who claimed they did not know any one of them.

In Hemley's final chapter emerges the picture of the Tasadays whose forefathers had isolated themselves in the rainforests (possibly for as long as 5-10 generations back) from the rest of the world, in great fear of an epidemic they called *fugu*. They were thus not "Stone Age" in the chronological sense as Elizalde had excitedly averred, although they indeed used stone tools simultaneously with metal tools. Hemley brought a stone tool for independent analysis by experts. It was genuine.

Who stood to benefit from the contention that the Tasaday discovery was a hoax? It appears now that Marcos, in a way, was partly right in declaring the Tasaday Reserve off-limits. Loggers were ready to pounce on the Tasaday territory at that time. In our rabid hatred for Marcos, we failed to see the hidden transcripts and agenda of the principal actors in the story.

Meanwhile, an injustice had been done to what was, after all, a genuine ethnolinguistic group.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

'Four gives'

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

IT embarrasses me to admit that I haggle with my dentist. It doesn't seem to bother him, however. In fact, the friend who recommended him did so, because, among other things, the dentist is amenable to payments by installment. Still, it seems alien to me to haggle with a medical professional, and yet that seems to be par for the course for so many people. So, I haggle.

My dentist doesn't have a fancy practice, and his clientele is strictly lower-middle class and below. I cannot speak highly enough of him, because he is a craftsman and extremely good at what he does, possessing that kindly manner that only Filipino medical practitioners seem to have these days. He should have an A-list clientele. But he doesn't. He assuredly does well for himself, but he is not, by any means, a millionaire, unlike so many orthodontists. The limitations on his income, it seems to me, are a reflection of the limitations of the society in which he has chosen to work.

The miracle is he hasn't decided to chuck it and go off in search of work abroad. A doctor friend working for the government recently told me a colleague of his, a nephrologist (kidney specialist), has resigned and taken up nursing. I have met Filipino nurses abroad, including the mother of a friend in New York who, after 30 years in America, not only has two houses out there but also is investing in property here at home, and I cannot, for the life of me, see how anyone can begrudge a person's decision to be a nurse overseas.

When you see the many middle-class villages in Metro Manila, what seems to me the most striking about them is how the homes in them represent a dead end. These villages and the homes in them were built by the generation of Filipino professionals who worked from the 1950s to the 1970s, and who, by their own hard work, were able to secure every family's dream: a home, some land, education for the children and retirement benefits after decades of working for a firm. The success of these generations may be measured by their ability to keep their children afloat, the kids born in the 1960s to the 1970s up to the early 1980s, who, even if they try their hardest, can never build the sort of life their parents did.

The perennial complaint of people my age is that it is virtually impossible on a salary to buy a car, get a mortgage to buy an apartment or a small house, and generally achieve the things their parents did. Increasingly those who can, juggle jobs to increase their paychecks.

The dead-end nature of things, as shown by the problems of the middle class, is best seen in the problems of the medical professionals within that class. I've often heard it said that if you became a doctor or a dentist in the 1960s or 1970s, you'd be assured of eventually having a house, a car and enough income to send your children through college. But aside from specialists giving up years of expensive specialization because no one can afford decent care anymore (so they might as well become nurses abroad), you have an ever-increasing number of young doctors barely able to keep themselves and their families financially afloat while they complete their specialization. One resident in one of the finest hospitals shocked me when he told me he earned less in a month than a newspaper editor (a profession not highly remunerated to begin with) does.

To live in a society where the professions, which once gained respect and assured their practitioners advancement in life, are now increasingly irrelevant, is a crushing, horrifying fate. The erosion this has on our work ethic must be profound. To be a doctor, and be looked at by your peers as someone assured of success—never mind the increasingly expensive education, which leaves you mired in debt (or your parents deprived of their savings)—only to discover that you do not have any patients who can afford the care you were trained to provide, this must breed cynicism and despair. It is a no-win situation. No wonder so many opt out and try their luck elsewhere.

In a better Philippines, I wouldn't have to haggle with my dentist. His other patients wouldn't have to privately arrange payment in two, three, four installments for basic dental work. His orthodontic patients wouldn't have to endure longer treatments because they would be ashamed to have their braces tightened when they're behind in their payments. Insurance would pay for it, either the private kind or that provided by the state. The majority of the patients of my dentist cannot afford insurance, and too many of them do not trust the state to provide them insurance which is often merely promissory in nature. In the real Philippines, government is irrelevant, because the only way to get by is to have a heart-to-heart talk with a service provider and haggle for "four gives."

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Corrections box

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

HARDLY a week passes without a reader writing me to call my attention to errors in grammar, names, dates and other information that appear in the INQUIRER's pages.

I enjoy getting these letters. It shows the newspaper has a corps of readers in the Philippines and elsewhere in the world who go through the editorial content of the INQUIRER with eagle eyes. I do not consider them faultfinders who have a "gotcha" attitude.

I look at these letters as—in the words of one of those readers—"a small contribution in helping make the INQUIRER the best and most credible newspaper in the country." I make it a point to acknowledge receipt of these letters to show appreciation for the efforts they took in writing and sending them, especially if they were sent by post mail.

Last year, a retired high school teacher from Roxas District, Quezon City wrote to me practically three times a week to point out mistakes in the use of punctuation marks, hyphens and adverbs by the reporters. They were handwritten and consisted of not less than three pages.

I can only imagine the time and effort that went into her letters. Not to mention the trouble that she, or whoever she asked to go to the nearest post office outlet, went through to buy stamps and have the letter mailed to the newspaper.

When one of her letters was published in the Letters section, she wrote to me to tell that some of her former students called her up to tell her that the grammar points she raised in that letter reminded them of their school days. For unknown reasons, my pen pal ceased her correspondence with me after four months, and I have not heard from her since. I would be happy to touch base with her again.

Errors

I immediately forward to the publisher all the letters I receive regarding errors in names, dates, places and what-have-you in news reports and other articles. Upon verification of the mistake, the proper correction is made in the "Corrections" box that appears on Page 4 of the newspaper whenever the need arises. That box, which first came out last June 7, has a Torrens title of sorts to that space; it cannot be superseded by any other materials.

There's a little caveat in the use of that box: it is off limits to errors that appear in columns or advertisements. In the case of columns, the correction has to be made either in the column concerned or the Letters section. For advertisements, the erratum has to come out in the page where the advertisement in question was earlier published.

Why the difference in treatment? The contents of columns are the responsibility of the columnists. The power of review by the editors over their work is limited to checking their grammar and style and possible libelous statements.

With regard to advertisements, their preparation is handled exclusively by the advertising staff. Hence, where and how their errors shall be corrected is left to their discretion.

The reaction of the readers to the "Corrections" box has been favorable. It has made the correction process faster and easier. The readers and affected parties have only to turn to Page 4 to find out if the INQUIRER acknowledged its mistakes, if any, and made the proper clarification.

Errors galore

I had a big laugh when a reader told me that the first thing he does when he gets his copy of the INQUIRER is go to Page 4. Not because he has a morbid desire to find out if the newspaper made a mistake, but to find out if he had spotted the error earlier. Why do I have a feeling that he is a reincarnation of a deceased newspaper proofreader?

A journalism student, Merceditas Garcia, seems to have given the "Corrections" box a similar treatment. She wrote: "PDI is my favorite newspaper and I dream that one day I will be a journalist of a major newspaper like yours. I felt proud for PDI when you came up with Corrections column that states the mistakes that may have been committed by your reporters.

"However, today's Corrections [referring to Aug. 2] disappointed me greatly. In one news, you corrected five mistakes about the correct names of certain congressmen. It is as if your reporter did not check or verify the names of the congressmen before she wrote it.

"How can mistakes of this kind happen to a newspaper like PDI? I will not be surprised if tabloids and other newspapers commit those mistakes. But PDI? That's surprising!

"Do you have proofreaders who check the information in your stories before you publish them? I was told that Time and Newsweek magazines have fact checkers or proofreaders who do nothing but go over the articles to make sure the names, dates and other information they contain are true and correct. I think PDI needs that kind of person in your staff."

Remedial measures

The subject of the reader's letter ("House doles out 'sharemanships') came out on July 20. It reported the efforts of leaders of the House of Representatives to settle disputes over the chairmanship of key legislative committees through term-sharing. Instead of resolving the conflicting ambitions by voting, the congressmen concerned agreed to hold the offices for a fixed period and later give way to the other aspirants.

The names of the congressmen affected by the term-sharing arrangement were mentioned in the news. But the problem is, the reporter got some of the names mixed up or did not write them correctly.

The newspaper's attention was called to the errors, a total of five. Upon verification, the appropriate corrections appeared in the "Corrections" box on Aug. 2. The errors escaped the notice of the members of the staff who handled that news report.

The lapses are regrettable. Obviously, something went wrong somewhere in the editorial review process. It looked like Murphy's Law reared its ugly head that day. I informed the publisher about the reader's letter and he said that proper measures are already being taken to avoid a repeat of the incident.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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Why tax the rich first

IN ADDRESSING the budget deficit, the government may tax to the hilt the rich taxpayers' net personal disposable income—or money left after providing for taxes and personal outlays—but not the poor taxpayers' meager earnings which are not even enough for their most basic needs: three square meals a day, clothing, shelter, education and medical services. This is simply the good old taxation system which was based on the ability to pay and on the benefits received. With their wealth, the rich benefit and enjoy more in civilized society, so they have to pay more for their continued greater benefit and enjoyment, by shouldering higher taxes (which they can afford to pay) that will help the government maintain the established order.

However, the government, which badly needs higher revenues on account of the ballooning budget deficit, would now rather raise indirect taxes—through new tax on texting and increased VAT on both luxury and essential goods—that will hardly affect the luxurious lifestyle of the rich, but worsen the already miserable life of the poor.

There are now countries with top graduated personal income tax rates of 40 percent to 60 percent, but our government has not expressed any intention to touch what it has gifted to rich individuals: a dramatic reduction in their top income tax rate—applied to taxable net business income over P500,000—from 60 percent as of December 1985 to 32 percent by January 2000. Hence, the government should demonstrate its professed concern for the poor by fine tuning its tax increases—by adhering to the ability-to-pay principle of taxation by way of restoring fully or partially the top tax rate for the rich even on an emergency and temporary basis.

We have rich taxpayers with very big disposable income. Many of them prospered because of the Filipino consumers who patronized their businesses. If so, they are indebted to the people. Therefore, they have to reciprocate by being the first to give out of their affluence. After all, even if they pay some extra millions in taxes—petty cash to them—the rich can still afford and enjoy their palatial homes, flashy cars, fabulous jewels and other luxuries that many Filipinos cannot even dream of.

—MARCELO TECSON,
San Miguel, Bulacan,
martecson@yahoo.com

If only Bush Jr. reads Bush Sr.

IN HIS MEMOIRS, "A World Transformed," written five years ago, George Bush Sr. wrote the following to explain why he didn't go after Saddam Hussein at the end of the Gulf War.

"Trying to eliminate Saddam...would have incurred incalculable human and political costs. Apprehending him was probably impossible... We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq... There was no viable 'exit strategy' we could see, violating another of our principles. Furthermore, we had been consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post-Cold War world. Going in and occupying Iraq, thus unilaterally exceeding the United Nations' mandate, would have destroyed the precedent of international response to aggression that we hoped to establish. Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land."

If only his son could read.

—REY O. ARCILLA
rarcilla@cyber-bay.com

GMA's policy to save life

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo declared in her State of the Nation Address that "[she] used policy to save life," and that "[t]he government has no policy to sacrifice life."

If she wants to be true to her statement that the government will not sacrifice life, then she must overturn the Department of Health policy diverting P50 million of its contraceptive fund to the Couples for Christ to promote the so-called natural family planning method. She must also overturn the Bureau of Food and Drugs' decision to delist Postinor, an effective and safe emergency contraceptive pill as declared by the World Health Organization. Policies that ensure access to the full range of contraceptives prevent the need for abortion.

GMA has also stated her desire to address social justice. To be true to this pronouncement, she must support the repeal of the 1932 Revised Penal Code provision penalizing women who undergo abortion and those assisting them. An example of a social justice policy is the repeal of Presidential Decree 772 on anti-squatting that was seen as an injustice to the urban poor and not a solution to the problem of squatting.

Estimates show that out of every 100,000 live births, 240 Filipino women die. And about 80,000 women end up hospitalized and many others die due to complications from clandestine and unsafe abortion. Unsafe abortion and its complications have been the number-three leading cause of hospital discharge from 1994-99.

Another six years is a long time to continue denying women's access to the full range of contraceptives and to safe and legal abortion. GMA will not be running for re-election in 2010. There is no excuse for courting the Catholic Church hierarchy and taking on its restrictive position.

If GMA comes out with policies promoting the reproductive right of Filipino women to self-determination, she will not just save an Angelo de la Cruz but thousands of Filipino women.

—CLARA RITA A. PADILLA,
Executive Director, EnGendeRights,
New York Mansions, 84 Montreal St.,
Cubao, Quezon City.

Student discounts, anyone?

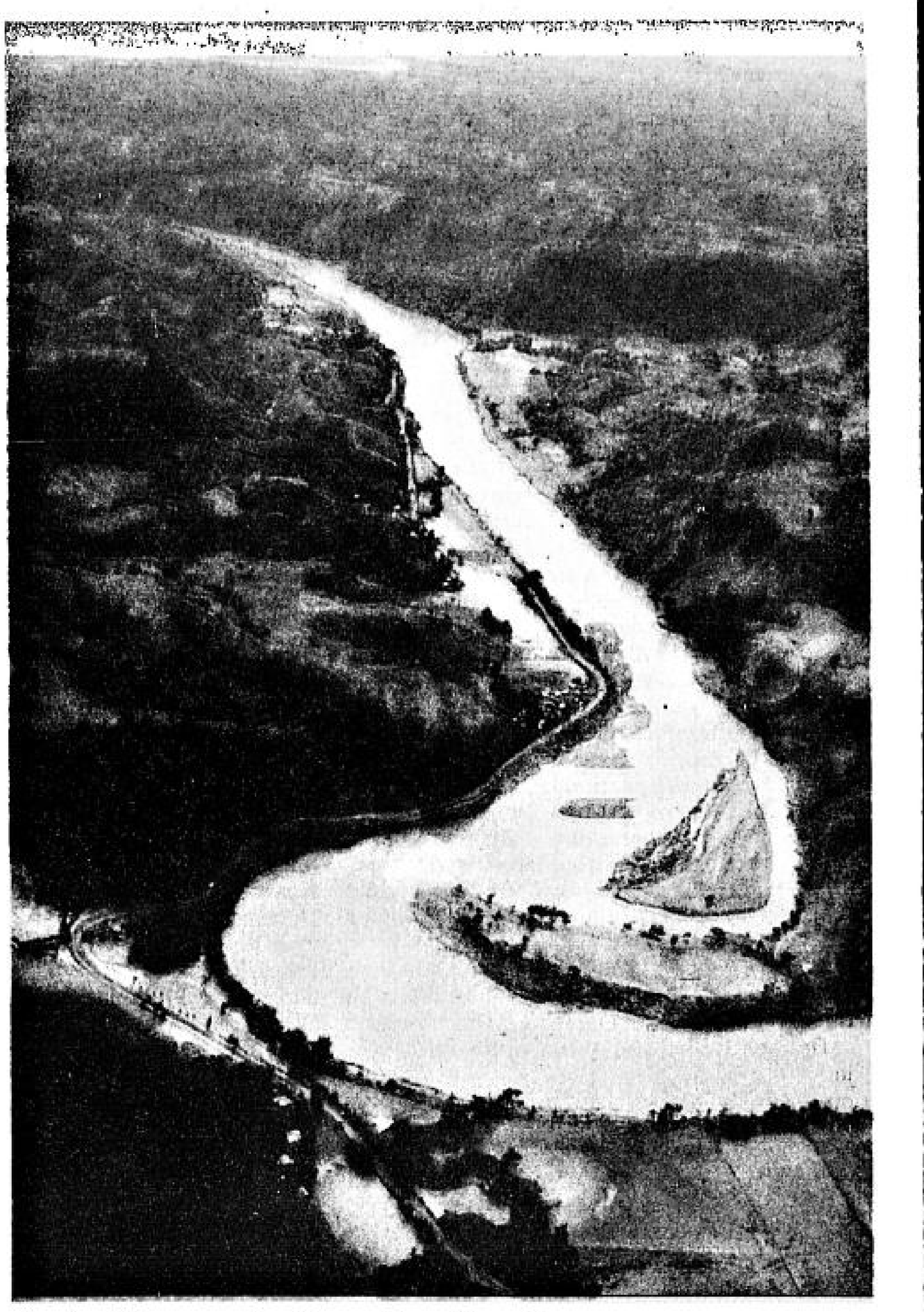
AS everybody knows, the prices of basic commodities and needs are going up. Just like everybody else, we, students, are affected by the rising prices. Personally, I am affected by the increase in transportation fares because, almost every day, I have to take the bus from Southland (Las Piñas) to Vito Cruz, Manila. To my knowledge, I'm supposed to get a student discount. But always the *konduktors* say that their bus company has directed them to give discounts only to senior citizens but not to students.

One time, my dad and I rode on the bus together. When my dad was about to pay the fare, he said "*Isang* Pedro Gil, *tsaka isang* Vito Cruz. *Yung sa* Vito Cruz *ay* student (then points at me), *'di ba may* discount *yun?*" But the *konduktor* refused to give me a discount. My dad got mad and tried to file a complaint.

The same thing happened when my friend and I took the bus going home. My friend's money was not enough for her P23 fare. But if the *konduktor* had given her a discount, her P20 could have sufficed. Since she was still asked for the P23, I had to lend her some money.

I think that giving student discounts in aircon buses is part of the law, so bus companies should abide by it. Prices are getting higher and higher, but that doesn't mean that our allowances automatically follow suit.

—KATLEYA QUIJANO
3rd year college
St. Scholastica's College
kat_seventeen@hotmail.com



A challenge to Senator Jamby

"JAMBY fights priest over tree" by Volt Contreras (PDI, 7/28/04) is a classic example of dramatizing a less important issue to orchestrate one's intended campaign. The drama was proven to be effective. The following day, another "tree issue" by Marlon Ramos "Ancient tree survives death threat" was on the PDI pages. I guess, the Jamby issue influenced the latter because Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun reversed her earlier decision allowing the UPLB to cut a tree which is said to be old, too weak to hold its ground, besides being considered hazardous.

Now that Sen. Jamby Madrigal and several green advocates initially succeeded on their noble campaign to save even an ailing tree, they should now focus their efforts on the more realistic and pressing problems—flash floods, landslides and overflowing rivers. They should run after those who are raping our few remaining forests. They should likewise push for an honest-to-goodness reforestation and greening of large areas once dominated by greedy and unconcerned loggers who failed to replace the trees they harvested.

Lately, my home province, Cagayan, was battered by typhoon Igme and many portions lay underwater for weeks. We, Cagayanos, are not the only people counting on Senator Madrigal's noble crusade. There are many others whose provinces also, time and again, get punished by floods caused by denuded forest. We hope that this time the neophyte senator will outdo her predecessors whose similar campaigns were only used as instruments for re-elections.

—PERCIVAL G. BARBA
Camp Olivas,
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

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Abandoned road project no more – DPWH

IN CONNECTION with the article titled "Abandoned road repair" by Marietta Velasco Giron (PDI, 7/12/04), the Department of Public Works and Highways would like to inform INQUIRER readers, particularly those in the concerned engineering district, that the road project in question is on S. Tuazon Street, which is classified as city road. Therefore, it is the Quezon City Engineer's Office that is implementing the project.

The project involves the selective replacement of concrete pavement on the outer lanes of the four-lane road from NS Amoranto Street (formerly Retiro) to Del Monte Street. It is under contract by RE Orlina Construction.

DPWH Quezon City District Engineer Oscar Cammayo said that he had informed Quezon City engineer Joselito Cabungcal about the abandoned road repair project and about the unattended deep excavations which have filled up with rainwater and therefore is hazardous to motorists. Cabungcal explained that the contractor stopped work due to a change in the work order but that it has resumed construction since July 19.

—JENNIFER D. PUNZALAN,
officer in charge,
Public Information Division,
Department of Public Works
and Highways, Manila

Concepcion's 'judicial interference'

CONSUMER and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion is out of line in denouncing what he calls "judicial interference" of the Court of Appeals in overturning the Meralco rate hike of May 30, 2003. (PDI, 8/3/04)

Obviously, Concepcion's knowledge of power issues is inversely proportional to his "expertise" in oil prices, although even that has lately been put to doubt by the President's spokesperson.

The CA decision he assails is consistent with the landmark Supreme Court decision upholding the P30-billion refund to Meralco customers. This is the consumerist spirit—where only prudent, reasonable and necessary costs are recoverable after audit—apparently forgotten by the Energy Regulatory Commission, abandoned by the Department of Energy and of which Concepcion is obviously clueless.

Investors in general are scared away because of excessive cost recoveries, i.e., high power rates, charged by Meralco.

Investors in the power industry, on the other hand, are scared away by the huge influence of Meralco with its mega-franchise covering 60 percent of the total market. With the Lopezes straddling generation and distribution, how can the new players hope to compete? If Concepcion is a true consumer advocate, I challenge him to join us in the fight to review the Lopez management of Meralco and break up the Meralco mega-franchise: Incidentally, smaller franchises charge far lower rates than Meralco, where bigness certainly does not benefit the consumer.

As for the Commission on Audit's expertise, the law and a long line of ERC decisions recognize COA's role as the audit arm of the ERC. COA acquitted itself well in its 1998 audit of Meralco, which led to the P30 billion refund last year.

Given the alarming trend at the ERC and the recent decisions of the courts, we are inclined to accept Concepcion's suggestion to abolish the ERC and leave power rates to the courts. After all, it was the high court that reinforced the concept of thorough and exhaustive public hearings to determine recoverable costs; the CA followed that ruling in reversing the ERC on the rate unbundling increase.

Finally, Concepcion should realize that the principal reason Meralco's books are subject to public scrutiny is that every centavo Meralco spends—and more—is passed on and recovered from the monopoly market it holds captive by reason of a legislative franchise. If all of this is Lopez money competing for patronage in an open and competitive market, then obviously Meralco could do with that money as they please.

We hope Concepcion will be able to see his way through the power issues. Otherwise, he might better serve consumers by keeping his watchful eye on oil prices.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president,
National Association of Electricity
Consumers for Reforms,
Unit 616 Roxas Seafront Gardens,
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

General Santos radioman shot

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A reporter of radio station GMA Super Radyo dxBB here is in critical condition after he was shot by one of the bodyguards of featherweight boxing champion Manny Pacquiao.

Jonathan Abayon had a single bullet wound on the right cheek from a .45 caliber pistol and attending physicians revealed that he had a 50/50 chance of surviving.

As of press time, the victim had been transferred to the hospital's intensive care unit after going through a major operation.

Christopher Guarin, dxBB station manager, told the INQUIRER that Abayon was on board a vehicle when he was shot by the suspect identified as a certain William Bael.

Guarin added Abayon and the suspect had just come from a drinking session in Pacquiao's residence in Barangay Labangal here when the shooting took place.

Quoting a certain Boy Lopez, driver of the vehicle, Guarin said the victim and the suspect traded jokes prior to the incident.

"Apparently, the suspect got mad resulting to [the] shooting incident," Guarin said.

The suspect fled after the incident and was being hunted by policemen.

Reporters here condemned the incident.

Rommel Rebollido, Phillippine News Agency bureau chief of Socsksargen, said it was a serious blow to the efforts of the media sector as free purveyor of truth.

He appealed to authorities to look deeper into the increasing number of killings and violence against journalists.

He challenged the local police to find all means to apprehend the suspect and file charges in court.

"I hope, this would not be another case of unsolved violence against newsmen," Rebollido lamented.

Supt. Willie Dangane, city police director, assured the local media that the police would not stop until the suspect was arrested.

Dangane said the police already have leads as to the whereabouts of the suspect and was optimistic he would be arrested soon.

Abayon was the second newsman shot here this year.

The first was Ely Binoya, station manager and program host of dzRH Radyo Natin, who was shot to death while he was riding his motorcycle on July 17.

The police had already identified the principal suspects in the Binoya slay, and had filed murder charges against them.

The court, however, had yet to issue warrants of arrest against the Binoya slay suspects.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

PANGAPOG FESTIVAL

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Sangutlog Si, from the Ata tribe aims his arrow in the archery competition, one of the events of the Pangapog 2004 festival in the Island Garden City of Samal.

SBMA notice of violation against US vessel stays

By Ansbert Joaquin
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The head of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority's ecology department said the SBMA did not withdraw the notice of violation issued to an American vessel that dumped human waste into Subic Bay here on July 27.

The statement came despite pronouncements from the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFACom) that the findings of the SBMA on the human waste dumping by the USS Russell were "inconclusive."

In a letter that she sent to several newspapers last week, Amethya de la Llana, SBMA ecology department head, said the SBMA might not have withdrawn its complaint against the erring vessel contrary to the statements by the VFACom.

De la Llana issued a notice of violation and slapped a $10,000 fine on USS Russell after receiving an incident report from the SBMA seaport department that the vessel discharged human wastes into Subic waters.

Jerome Martinez, port operations division head, also said in his report that two US Navy personnel accosted the seaport investigating team that took pictures of the discharge and confiscated the diskette on which the photos were stored.

Martinez later told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that the human waste might just have been brought in by tide from the Kalaklan River in Olongapo City.

On Thursday last week, VFACom Executive Director Zosimo Jesus Paredes II met with staff members of the SBMA seaport and ecology departments.

After the meeting, Paredes issued a statement saying the VFACom sent a team, which he headed, to investigate the alleged human waste discharge by USS Russell.

The statement said "it could not be ascertained if the wastes came from the USS Russell or whether it was washed down the shore due to the inclement weather and coincidentally swept by the side of the US vessel."

Paredes also claimed that "further investigation and research concluded that military ships do not dispose of solid human waste; that human excrement is processed, treated and turned into bilge before being disposed of; and that with inconclusive evidence and facts, the SBMA thought it just to withdraw the complaints."

Paredes said the diskette on which the photos were stored was not confiscated but was "surrendered" by seaport authorities.

But in a letter sent by De la Llana to several newspapers in reaction to a report (not in the INQUIRER) last Friday, she hinted that the SBMA and the VFACom might not have actually conducted any comprehensive re-investigation and that the SBMA might not have withdrawn its complaint against the US vessel.

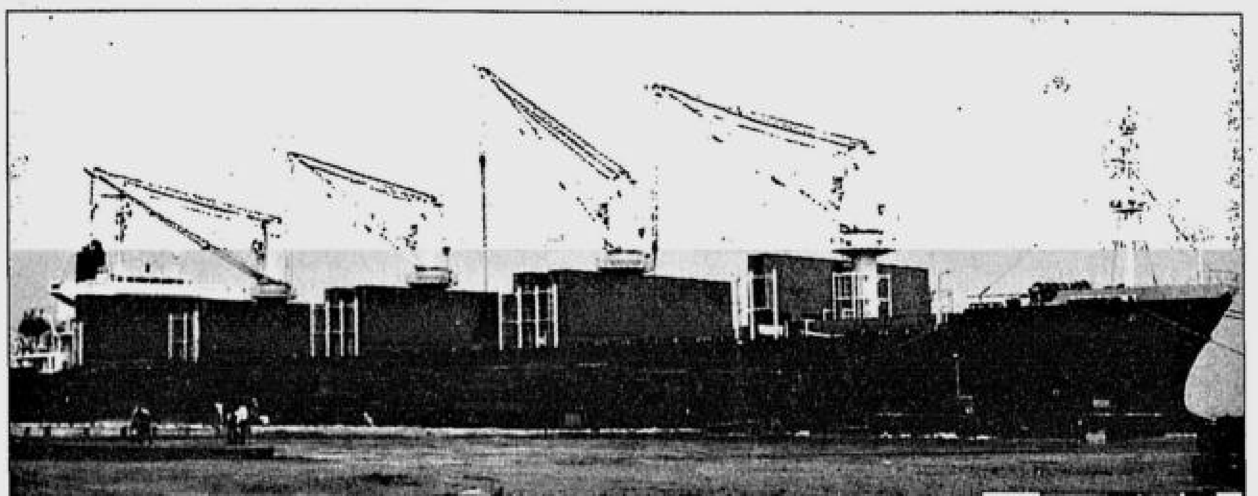
De la Llana was reacting to a statement by shipping agent, Rose Baldeo, who was quoted in the papers as saying that the SBMA ecology department "ignored due process when it went over the heads of higher authorities" in citing the USS Russell for violation of Philippine environmental laws.

De la Llana said the issuance of a notice of violation to the USS Russell "in fact, set on course the due process whereby the supposed violators could explain why they should not be penalized."

"But why did USS Russell and Ms Baldeo's firm choose not to receive the citation and stump the whole process of investigation? Was there any re-investigation that nullified the original report from the seaport department and thus effectively terminated the due process (that) began with the serving of our notice of violation? De la Llana asked.

Big industries now turn to Harbour Centre Port

HCPTI gets 90% of international non-containerized market

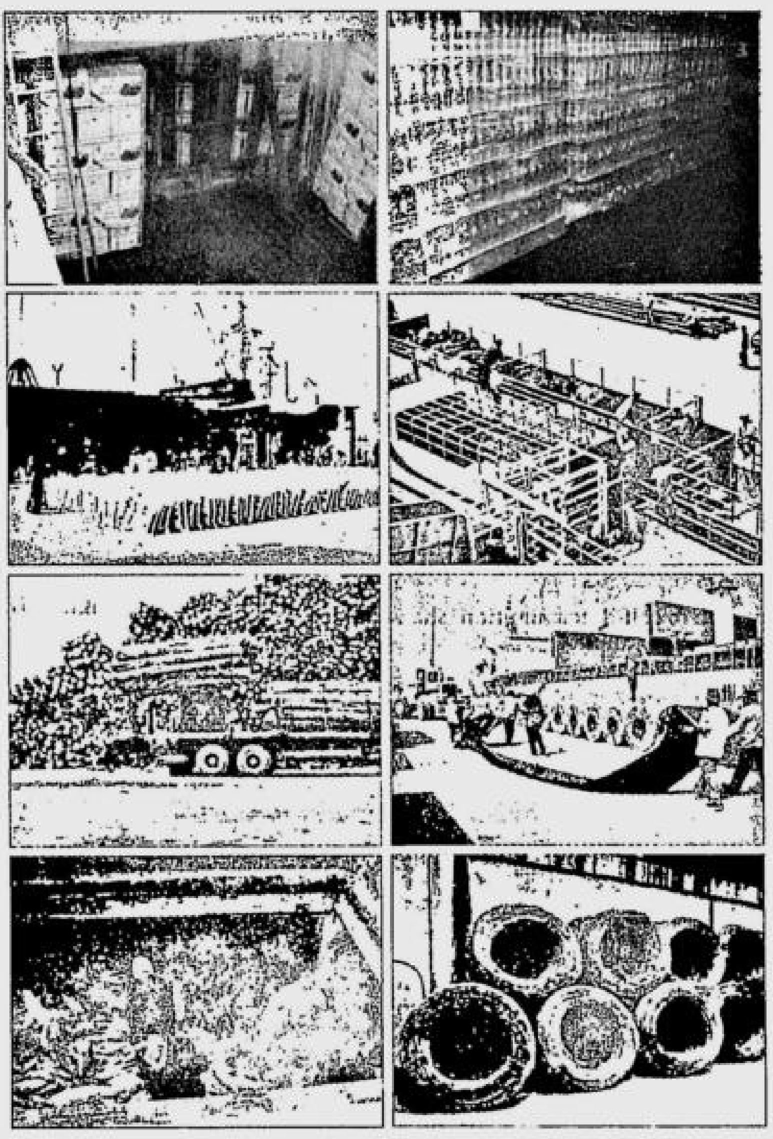


Harbour Centre's expansive working apron and back up area allow efficient and unhampered operations, while its deep berthing drafts enable big international vessels to conduct pierside operations

Michael Romero, CEO of Harbour Centre Port

Big companies from practically all types of industries are now moving to Harbour Centre Port Inc. (HCPTI) as their discharging point.

In fact, for the months of June and July 2004 alone, 90% of international non-containerized vessels entering Manila and the Philippines have docked at Harbour Centre Port. Their cargoes include steel, logs, lumber, rice, fertilizer, gypsum, silica, frozen fishes, wheat, grains, sugar, soya, livestock (cattle), and iron ore, among others.



Among the cargoes being handled at Harbour Centre Port include fresh produce, grains, livestock, logs, frozen fish, steel coils and wire rods

The reason these companies have been switching to Harbour Centre Port include faster vessel turnaround, unmatched efficiency, and bigger savings on their shipments.

This is because Harbour Centre Port offers superior services, as well as state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, including deep berthing drafts that enable big vessels to conduct pierside operations, eliminating the added handling cost of barges that ferry shipment from the open sea to the pier.

Harbour Centre Port features deep berthing drafts of -10.5 to -12.5 MLLW, by far the deepest among all Philippine ports. With a port this deep, big international vessels can easily conduct pierside operations. Shippers no longer have to pay handling fees charged by barges that transport cargoes to the docking area.

The port boasts of a world-class working apron measuring 865 meters in length by 45 meters in width, providing ample space for unhampered and efficient unloading operations. Efficient arrastre and stevedoring services are also available.

The port's world-class apron is complemented by an expansive, 15-hectare back up area where cargoes up to 6 TEUs high can be properly stacked, ensuring against misplaced or lost cargoes. The port also has a truck scale and a truck holding area that can fit in 500 trucks at a time.

With the expansive working and back-up area, cargoes are properly stored and accounted for -- no misplaced or lost shipments and absolutely zero pilferage!

Each operation is carefully planned to ensure the highest level of efficiency. "We carefully map out every operation. We believe this is key to higher level of productivity," explained Michael Romero, CEO of Harbour Centre Port. "This allows us to correct inappropriate unloading procedures even before actual operations begin. It helps us accomplish things much faster and provide bigger savings to our clients."

Unloading and dispatch of cargoes are supervised by Harbour Centre's experienced personnel trained in providing honest and straightforward services. No red tape and corruption guaranteed!

Furthermore, the port boasts of a tight security system. Vehicles entering and leaving the port are carefully monitored. Security personnel are strategically positioned all over the port to guard against theft, pilferage and other suspicious activities.

Complementing its superior facilities are ample port equipment, including an 80-ton heavy-lift capacity Gottwald Harbour Mobile crane, as well as 15, 12, 10, 8, 5 and 3-ton forklifts, among other equipment. At present, Harbour Centre has a total of 33 fully-owned forklifts with capacities ranging from 3 to 15 tons.

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- North Port: 865 lineal meters of berthing capacity which can hold up to 8 vessels at a time
- South Port: 250 lineal meters of berthing capacity which can hold up to 4 vessels at a time
- Berthing Walls are supported by 27 meter long steel sheet piles from Luxembourg, while reclamation works were done by Jan de Nul of Belgium using the most advanced technologies in reclamation and dredging.
- Berthing Drafts: from -10 m.l.l.w to -12.5 m.l.l.w
- Working Apron: 1) North Port 30 meters wide by 865 lineal meter-long and; b) South Port 20 meters wide by 250 lineal meters long
- Back-up Area: 15 hectares with a stacking capacity of up to 6 TEU's high and can withstand up to 9,000 PSI in strength
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Comelec disqualifies winning mayor in Bohol

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The winner of the May 2004 mayoral race in Batuan, Bohol was stripped of her victory after the Commission on Elections declared she was not qualified to run for the post.

The Comelec en banc, in a decision promulgated on July 23, canceled the certificate of candidacy of now Batuan Mayor Gregoria Dampog-Pepito, a *balikbayan* and erstwhile American citizen, because she was five months short of the residency requirement that would qualify her to run for an elective post in the Philippines.

Dampog-Pepito failed to cast her vote on election day because she was not in the town's list of voters.

The Comelec resolution came 74 days after the May 10 elections and 23 days after Dampog-Pepito assumed the position occupied by then two-term Mayor Sixto Dano.

Pepito was proclaimed winner over Dano by 1,548 votes in the mayoral contest of Batuan, around 51 km from Tagbilaran City.

The ruling did not, however, say who would take over as town mayor—whether or not it was Dano or the winning vice mayor.

Dano filed the petition to deny due course to Pepito's candidacy last Jan. 7 or two days after the deadline in the filing of certificates for candidates for local positions.

He claimed that Pepito stated that she had been a resident of the Philippines before the May 10 polls for six years and four months when she was an American citizen since the 1970s and her intermittent stay in the Philippines was by tourist visa only.

Pepito applied for repatriation and was able to take her oath of allegiance before Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo only on Oct. 29, 2003, Dano added.

Lawyer Fe Virginia Odtohan, Bohol provincial election supervisor (PES), earlier recommended the cancellation of Pepito's certificate of candidacy, noting that "all the evidence" presented by both petitioner and respondent showed that Pepito was an American citizen.

Under Comelec procedures, the PES can only investigate but not decide on such cases.

To be a registered voter under section 117 of the Omnibus Election Code and section 9 of Republic Act 8189, Odtohan said one must have resided in the Philippines for one year and in the locality where he proposes to vote for at least six months immediately prior to the election.

Regarding the qualifications of a local elective official, Odtohan said an elective official must be a Filipino citizen, a registered voter in the local government unit where he intends to be elected, and "a resident for at least one year immediately preceding the day of the election."

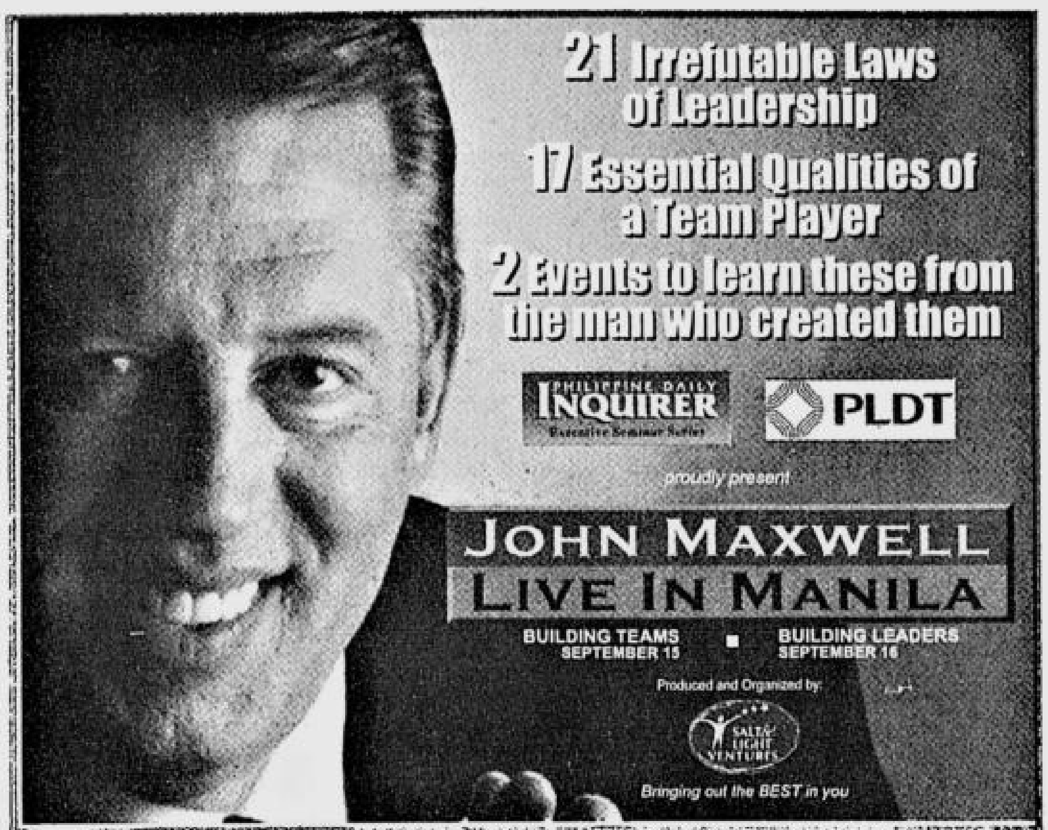
"Mathematically, Pepito could only be considered a resident of Batuan for more than seven months only immediately preceding the May 10, 2004 elections reckoned from the time she took her oath of allegiance from Oct. 29, 2003," the Comelec resolution pointed out.

The five-page resolution noted that Pepito is "short of the one-year residency requirement mandated by Article V of the Constitution and of the Local Government Code."

"Let us just wait for the right time. We have always abided by the law," Dano told the INQUIRER in Cebuano when reached for comment.

Dano, 45, claimed he lost because he did not campaign actively, expecting the Comelec ruling earlier but ending up as a "liar" to voters when Pepito's disqualification failed to come.

Pepito was not available for comment but told a radio station here that she still has to receive a copy of the resolution.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Electric coops raise power rates without public consultations

NAGA CITY—Exactly a week after directors of a local electric cooperative here joined militant groups in a protest during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address urging her to stop the impending power rate increase, the Camarines Sur Electric Cooperative II announced last week it would charge its consumers higher for their power consumption.

Rolly Pante, Casureco II spokesperson and concurrent Institutional Service Department manager, said the electric cooperative would now charge its consumers P2.2802 per kilowatt-hour for the generation charge, with the 13.67-centavo increase starting with the July billing.

He said the increase would be added to the generating cost being paid by the consumers.

Pante said there was no need for public hearings to implement the power rate increase.

He said the increase was authorized by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) because of the increase in the prices of fuel and the depreciation of the value of peso against the US dollar.

He added that the ERC ordered electric cooperatives to implement the increase on a staggered basis.

Unlike Casureco II, Pante said other electric cooperatives had already implemented the increase since June.

Casureco II directors led by Lito Del Rosario hogged the public's attention when the INQUIRER reported their opposition to the power rate increase and joined militant groups in protest, although many consumers dismissed it as a mere gimmick.

Leyte

In Maasin City, the Southern Leyte Provincial Development Council (PDC) will ask the ERC to explain its approval of the increase in electricity rates by the local electric cooperative without conducting a public hearing here.

A consumers group appealed to Gov. Rosette Lerias and Maasin City Mayor Damian Mercado to find ways to stop the Southern Leyte Electric Cooperative (Soleco) from increasing its rates.

Soleco increased its rate by as much as 30 percent starting last April, a move that drew criticism from the Consumers Association of Southern Leyte, led by Agustin Arnaiz Sr., as it was done without holding a public hearing.

The Soleco, which services about 40,000 electric consumers in the province, has increased its rates to P5.60 per kWh from P4.75 per kWh starting April.

Lerias said she learned that a public hearing was held in Manila. ERC published the notice in a national newspaper (not the INQUIRER) and a Metro Manila-based tabloid.

But the governor said this was questionable since Southern Leyteños did not even know about it.

But she said she would want to hear first the side of ERC before contemplating any legal action.

"There's something wrong why they conducted the public hearing in Manila and published the public hearing notice in newspapers not circulated in Southern Leyte," Lerias said.

No hikes

Soleco manager Ernesto Lamoste said they did not petition for an increase, adding that the increase was the effect of unbundling of rates, which the Soleco petitioned for and was approved by the ERC in April.

"We are not passing the blame to the ERC. We are just following their order," Lamoste told reporters here Friday. "We have to follow the order or else we will be penalized."

He maintained that invitations to a public hearing had been sent to all mayors in the province.

Lamoste's statement however contradicted his pronouncement in last month's PDC meeting where he appealed for understanding why they had to increase their rates. He had then pointed out that Soleco had not asked for an increase for the last 20 years and that the increase was prompted by high operational costs and big system losses. *Alan Pelayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau*

ROUNDUP

'Pancit' fest in Tuguegarao

TUGUEGARAO CITY—This city will hold the second *pancit* festival on Aug. 10-16 as part of the city fiesta celebrations honoring its patron saint, San Jacinto de Polonia. Romeo Allam, city secretary, said the city government would provide 500 kilograms of *miki* (locally made noodles) for the *pancit* cooking contests during the festival. The city has 43 *panciterias* selling different kinds of the noodles. The most famous of these is the Ibanag *pancit*, a delicacy of Cagayanos, which was introduced here in World War II. ***Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

BIR employees suspended

ILAGAN, Isabela—Two employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue in Isabela were suspended for 60 days, while extortion charges against them are pending before the court. Eduardo Pagulayan, revenue district officer, said the suspension of Teresita Bagunu, administrative officer, and Jocelyn Lora, collection officer, was imposed by BIR officials in Metro Manila to stop them from influencing the investigation of their cases. Bagunu and Lora were arrested in an entrapment operation in September last year while allegedly receiving P4,000 in bribe money from a businessman. Supt. Agripino Lopez Jr., Isabela police intelligence and investigation chief, said they entrapped the BIR officials after businessman Manolo Acosta complained that they were asking money in exchange for the non-reporting of the businessman's supposed tax deficiencies. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

2 men gunned down

BANGUED, Abra—Two men were gunned down in a billiard hall in Barangay Zone 2 here on Tuesday night. Police identified the victims as Venancio Basos, 40, a driver, and Noel Edralin, 20, a student. Reports said the victims succumbed to bullet wounds in their heads. According to witnesses, a lone gunman, armed with a .45 cal, gun, attacked the victims at about 8:40 p.m. ***Artha Kira Paredes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

New Tineg mayor

BANGUED, Abra—The Commission on Elections has declared Edwin Crisologo the new mayor of Tineg town. Comelec Director Armando Velasco told a radio interview here that Crisologo and seven councilors of the town were proclaimed in the Comelec national office in Manila on Wednesday. He said there was a tie between two candidates for the eighth councilor position. ***Artha Kira Paredes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Drug suspect shot

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—One of the top illegal drug suspects in the province was shot and wounded on Thursday after he tried to escape from policemen in Bambang town. Senior Supt. Felix Caddali, provincial police director, identified the suspect as Vladimir Yasay, 38. Caddali said Yasay rammed his tricycle against the policemen's car after he sensed his impending arrest. Reports said a policeman was forced to shoot Yasay when he ignored the three warning shots and started to flee. ***Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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C. Luzon, Bicol groups decry low wage hikes

LABOR groups in Central Luzon and Bicol regions have assailed the low pay increases granted by the regional wage boards last week.

The Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board last week approved a P15-increase in cost of living allowance (Cola) for Central Luzon workers, and P12 for Bicol workers.

The Manggagawa para sa Kalayaan ng Bayan (Makabayan) and the Workers Alliance in Region 3 (War-3) found the amount too small, saying this was not enough to cover the diminished value of the P224 daily minimum wage in the region implemented two years ago.

According to the groups, the wage value diminished by 50 to 70 percent.

Josefino Torres, regional Department of Labor and Employment director, said the P15 Cola will be "integrated into the basic wage after (a year)."

"This is a pathetic attempt of the wage board and the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to appease workers long clamoring for humane wages," said Rolando Ilag, War-3 chair.

War-3, an affiliate of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, has demanded a P125 across-the-board increase.

Emily Fajardo, Makabayan regional chair, said the additional allowance would "not have a cumulative effect on workers."

This was so because the amount would not add up to the overtime pay and 13th month pay, Fajardo said.

"It really does not give a substantial relief to workers who get so little for so many hours of works," she said.

Ilag said the amount was not enough to cover the increase in transportation fare.

"Even the government pegged the food basket in the region at P490 a day. At the current level of the minimum wage and this additional Cola, there's hardly any food on the workers' meal tables," he said.

Fajardo also doubted the compliance of companies and the will of the labor department to enforce the additional Cola.

In Legazpi City, different labor groups from the region also said the P12-increase was not enough to meet the high costs of commodities nowadays.

During a protest-rally on Aug. 3 in front of the Department of Labor and Employment office in Legazpi, Frank Cariño, Kilusang Mayo Uno-Camarines Sur spokesperson, said they were insulted by the meager salary increase that RTWPB was about to implement.

"The P12-wage hike is not even within the 10 percent of our clamor, which is P125 a day," Cariño said. KMU said the average daily cost of living is about P510 per day, far beyond the around-P180 minimum wage in the region. They also pointed out the series of price increases in basic commodities.

The P12 wage hike in Bicol would take effect 15 days after the publication of the wage order in a newspaper with regional circulation. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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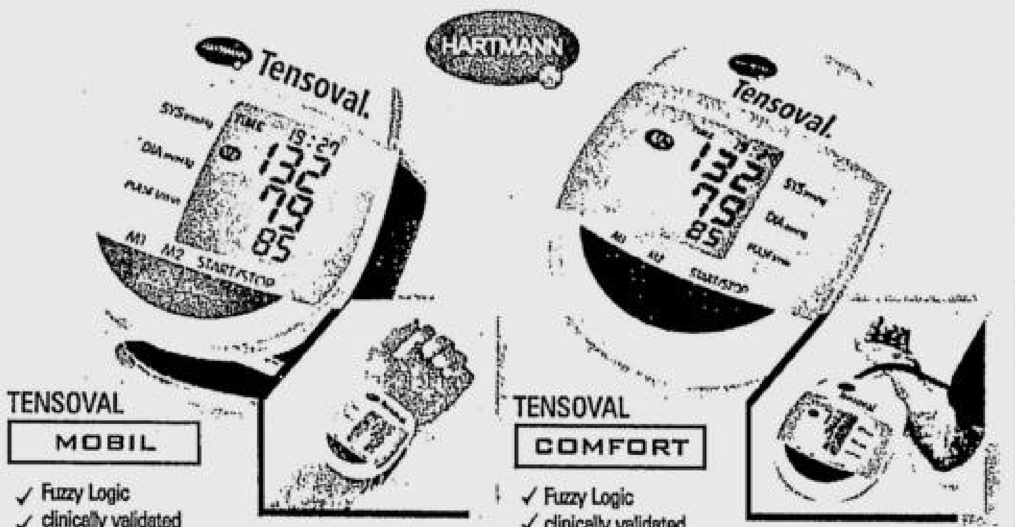

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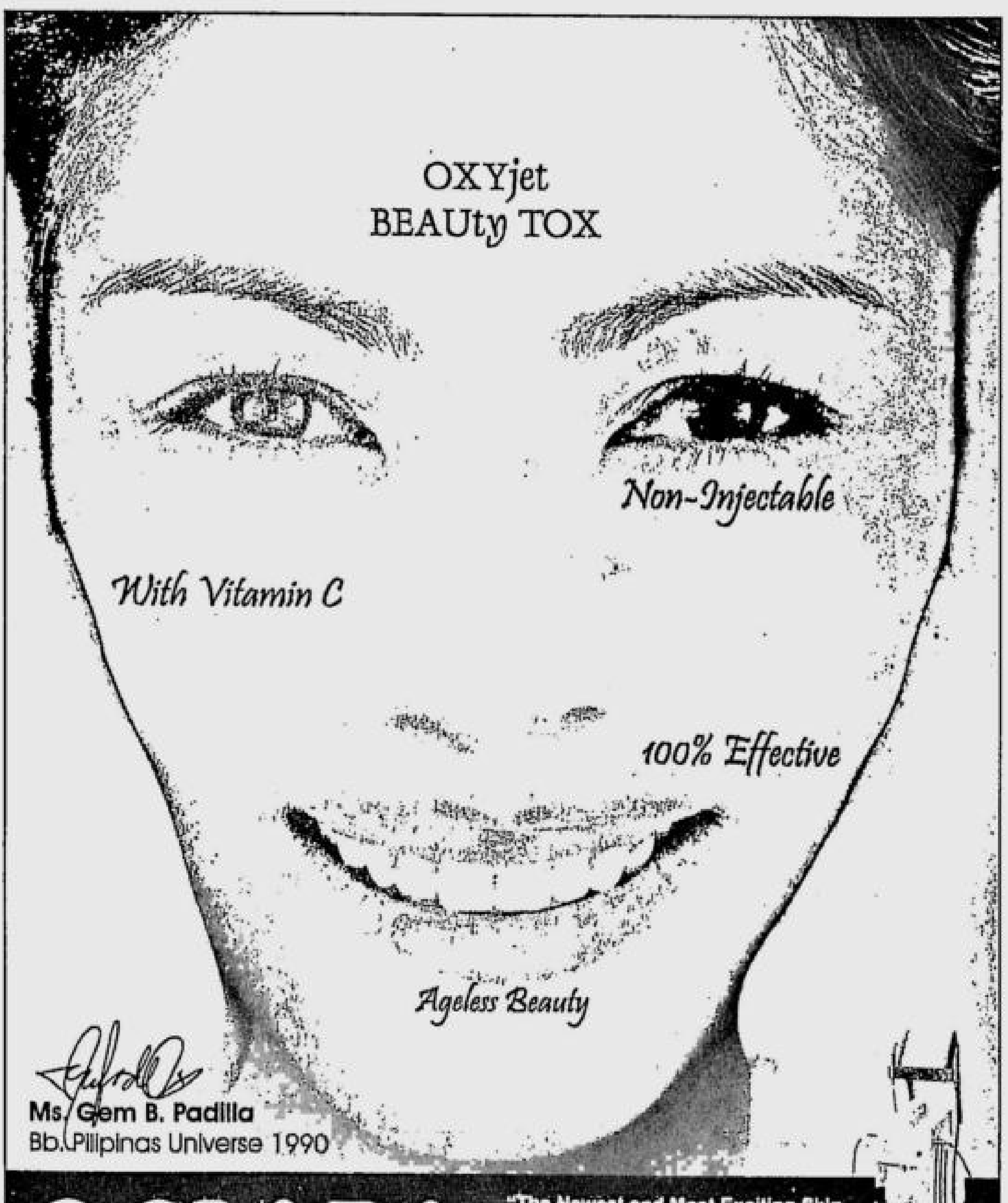

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Take the cut, family planning expert tells Pinoy macho men

From page A1

well afford a big family given his profession, not to mention his being the eldest child of Sen. Juan Flavier, a former health secretary.

Yet like the street vendor, the 42-year-old "Jondi" decided to have his vasectomy two years ago. But compared to Garcia, he only has two children, now aged 17 and 14.

"I decided to do it because my wife Patricia had had two high-risk pregnancies and because we want to allot more time and attention per child," said the young Flavier, a former director of the Friendly Care Foundation, which advocates family planning.

He said he was operated on by a friend in November 2002, simply "on the small conference table in my office." Like Garcia, he recalled bearing with the expected sting from the tiny wound for just three days.

Not compromised

Both men swore their manhood was never compromised.

"You can say that it is still working perfectly well," said Flavier, sounding like his witty old man, even inviting the INQUIRER to call up his wife, too, for "validation."

"I still get into my wife's nerves, but now it's because I don't seem to get enough," went Garcia's boast.

In the world of Boy Dagis (his Kapampangan family had nicknamed him "rat" for being skittish and frolicsome as a little boy), tales of his improved sexual prowess get shared with his neighborhood drinking buddies.

Indeed, talking Filipino men into having a vasectomy primarily involves dispelling some prevalent "misconceptions," said Dr. Ricardo Gonzales, medical adviser to the Social Acceptance Project for Family Planning of the Academy for Educational Development (AED), which is funded by the US Agency for International Development.

"It's not castration," he stressed, because the man would keep his sex drive, would still have an erection and ejaculate, and might even "perform better" because he was no longer worried about impregnating his spouse.

The procedure involves cutting the tube where sperm passes and does not affect the testes that produces the sex hormone. "The blocked sperm is just reabsorbed by the body; semen is still secreted but minus the sperm," he said.

Window period

But how come some wives still get pregnant even after sleeping with a vasectomized mate? Gonzales cited two usual reasons: Either she was already conceiving without her knowing it before the husband underwent the procedure, or they had intercourse during the post-operation "window period" wherein the remaining sperm which lay outside the sealed section was released.

This window period spans the first three months after the operation or about the time it takes for a man to have 20 ejaculations outside "normal sex." Couples are advised to use condoms if they would have intercourse within this period, he added.

For Gonzales, there's a "strategy" for convincing Pinoy macho men to take the cut.

Based on his experience, "the wrong way to do it is to blame the husband for having too many children, for not having his libido in check," said Gonzales, who previously served for 15 years as director of the government-run Jose Fabella Hospital in Manila.

"Instead, he must be made to realize that for the love of his wife, it's high time he helped and took over after the other methods had failed," he said. An engaging public speaker, Gonzales has been promoting family planning way before he was tapped to push the three-year AED project, which was launched in August 2002.

Where the boys are

He recalled that the Fabella hospital achieved the "highest acceptance rate" for vasectomy operations during his watch, partly because "we have a strategy called 'Where the Boys Are,' wherein we approach the man while he waits outside the delivery room and his wife is in labor."

It's one of those "rare" occasions that prompt typical Filipino husbands go to a health facility.

"And you know how some wives are when in labor: You hear them cursing and screaming at the husbands for getting them pregnant for the nth time," he said, smiling.

Flavier also observed: "In my talks, some men seemed easier to convince if they would have other male friends doing it, preferably on the same day and in the same clinic. For us Filipinos, it becomes more reassuring if we have company."

He said it reminded him of how pubescent boys, especially in remote rural barrios that lacked clinics, preferred to get circumcised at the same time as a *barkada*, lining themselves up before the village barber in some secluded spot.

Gonzales explained that the latest vasectomy procedure no longer involved cutting open the skin of the scrotum but just having it "punctured" using a special forcep. An operation would normally cost up to P3,500, including doctor's fees, he said.

Covered by Philhealth

And not everyone seems to be aware yet that vasectomy, along with tubal ligation, has been covered by Philhealth, the government's health insurance arm, for the last two years, according to Gonzales.

He said the AED welcomed the debates over the need to address the country's alarming population growth, triggered by a recently filed House bill calling on the government to adopt a "two-child policy."

The population question always gets tossed around during campaign seasons, he noted, "but we never expected that this time it will be a post-election issue."

As for Boy Dagis, the father of seven may not be the perfect poster boy for his chosen family planning method. But he has since been urging his friends—also vendors and construction workers—to follow him to the clinic while their families are still of manageable sizes.

RP starts first of 7 lifetimes of healing environment wounds

From page A1

Flores, donated five sacks of forest tree seeds.

The seeds are now being processed—before dropping on denuded forests—by another environment volunteer, Jun Catan of Mapecon, at his plant in Alaminos, Laguna. To ensure growth, Jun is mixing organic compost with the seeds, which are being dried.

We shall drop the seeds before the rainy season ends in September with a prayer—a la Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin: "Please God, make these seeds grow."

After all, with God everything is possible. Take a bow, Emy.

Another reforestation project we are now doing is the massive planting of bamboo all over the country.

Bamboo is an excellent substitute for timber. It is just as hardy as narra, dao or mahogany but grows quickly. What takes the traditional forest trees one hundred years takes the bamboo only six years.

Bamboo growing will be a boon to rural dwellers, who cut trees as a source of income. We shall give them bamboo seedlings to plant.

We are in contact with bamboo growers, like Nereo Paculdo, whose plantations in Aguilar, Pangasinan, and in Zambales are flourishing with all kinds of bamboo; and in Pililla, Rizal, where there is a commercial bamboo plantation.

Our other environment partner, Mirant Corp., is also growing mangrove seedlings at its Pagbilao, Quezon, plant for distribution around the country.

We have also asked the Federation of Mountaineers in the Philippines to help in the planting.

The mountains

The boom in the mining industry from the 1950s to the 1970s entailed huge social and environmental costs.

According to a study, forests, sometimes located in critical watershed areas, were cleared out. The explosions and the disemboweling of mountains affected the natural ecosystem. The open-pit operations stirred up clouds of dust which destroyed greeneries and adversely affected people's lungs for kilometers around.

The milling and concentrating activities emitted pollutants into the air. Mine tailings or wastes, made up of crushed rocks, chemicals and traces of metals when recklessly dumped, caused siltation and the poisoning of rivers (28 from north to south of the Philippines), rice fields and coastal areas, killing plants, fish and other organic materials.

But do not be horrified.

We contacted Dr. Perla Santos Ocampo, president of the National Academy in Science and Technology Philippines. Now, in coordination with Neri, scientists Asuncion K. Raymundo, Fidel Rey P. Nayve, Ronald Navarro, Veronica Migo, Catalino Alfafara and Estela T. Paner are preparing to test their bio-remediation technique to detoxify mining wastes at the sites. Neri will give this project priority.

The exciting part of this mining detoxification is the use of coconut water and *malunggay* seeds and not imported chemicals, as we expected. How God loves the Philippines!

Another volunteer environmentalist is Dr. Harry Kremnitz of ECCE International Corp., who vowed to detoxify mining wastes using just microorganisms, which we have in abundance in garbage.

Kremnitz will use a machine of the Department of Science and Technology to demonstrate the simple technique. Neri will try this method in Davao, where gold miners are poisoned every minute. Kremnitz promised to give jobs to rural marginalized people.

At a very minimal cost, with the use of *malunggay* seeds, coconut water and microorganisms, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines can now heave a sigh of relief.

Fishing

Philippine waters are besieged by foreign poachers and local fishing companies which use destructive methods, such as the *muro-ami* (masquerading as *pa-aling*) zipper dynamite, sonar and what-have-you.

Fortunately, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines' environment committee chair, Tony Oposa, is also an environment partner.

Tony is now "policing" the waters of Cebu province, which are infested with human sharks who electrocute the fish. As a result, the marginalized fishermen are able to catch only one kilo of fish daily.

Tony succeeded in having the courts in Cebu arrest three alleged big fish (who are all out on bail). Only God knows if the three are still fishing.

We are working on the restoration of DAO 17, which bans fishing within 15 km of the beach.

We are supporting the education campaign of environment societies, like Tambuyog Center, on sustainable fishing.

We salute Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun and her two competent undersecretaries, Rene de Rueda and Met Ignacio, for the data and satellite photos they provided, plus the analysis of the condition of the Philippine environment.

The DENR promised to give away seedlings in their respective nurseries in the 16 regions of the country. And to develop the bamboo industry.

Conclusion

All problems have solutions. As a matter of fact, before the problem was, the solution was already there.

And, like Secretary Boncodin, we believe that more things are wrought by prayer than this world ever dreamed of.

Isn't life cute?

KINGDOM OF A HIGHER WORLD

A FATHER'S MEANINGFUL DEATH

Recollections of an OFW's son (a message to OFWs and the nation)

> In many instances the first prompting to do good and the last barrier against doing wrong are the same – *character.* -- DR. OS GUINESS

Things have come to an absurd end when real heroism is unidentified because most of what catches our national attention is political show. Character quietly forged in the storms of life is generally disregarded, while political expediency rules the day. When crisis beckons us to show national character, we have no well to draw from and we cower away in fear. Take the case of Angelo dela Cruz and the issues related to the pull-out of our troops from Iraq. It is no surprise then that we have shamefully become the butt of all jokes worldwide.

The present crisis of character in our society is far deeper than any national scandal. For this reason, *the search for a remedy needs to rise above current controversies into genuine social responsibility.* The latter being a product of hard-to-find individual moral character that when found, ought to be celebrated and written about in order to be remembered over time. *In a country like ours that has a weak sense of history, a damaged culture and a lot of lessons yet to be learned, it is a breath of fresh air to read about a true-to-life story of the meaningful death of a father, and more so, the meaningful life of a son.*

The ambiguity that surrounded the situation of Angelo dela Cruz led Police Chief Inspector Eric Escosio Noble (Camp Crame, Quezon City) to recall the death of his father, an OFW who died in Iraq. This police officer's email, sent at a crucial time in our country, points us to real heroism, i.e., character. This email was sent prior to the homecoming of Angelo dela Cruz. It contains a hearty message coming from a higher perspective.

Dated July 21, 2004, his email goes ...

We were told that he died on September 11, 1983 in an unknown hospital in Basrah for reasons we did not know. It was during the Iran-Iraq war. We were told that my father died of neglect since the priority of rescue then were the wounded Iraqi soldiers. My father was a carpenter who went to Iraq in March of 1983. I was in second year high school then. Poverty left us with no choice but to accept the hard reality of life and be content with bringing his dead body back to Manila.

That would have been impossible, too, if not for an uncle, then an Air Force soldier, who helped us all the way. The military helped bring my father's body home. Because of that, I have had a very high regard for the men in uniform. The good will extended to us by the military went a long way.

At 17, without any other means of pursuing education, I decided to take the entrance examination at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). At that time, my mother who was a plain storekeeper left my and my three younger brother, ages 13, 11 and 9. The PMA was my only hope for a better future. I got in. Life was rough inside the academy, but I told myself that I would rather die than go home.

My father's death served as my challenge and inspiration. His letter encouraging his sons to study hard was posted on a wall in our house. Long after my father was gone, his dreams continued to live on in his family, i.e., a dream that would have stayed on or ended with me, the eldest son.

The death of my father closed a very important door of *a promising future* for me. However, I thank God that I was not blinded by hatred against the government nor against anyone else. *I was able to see beyond the closed door by looking at another door that opened for me.* I entered the PMA in 1988 and graduated in 1992.

Today I serve as Police Chief Inspector at the Philippine National Police (PNP). My mother is still a humble storekeeper in our hometown in Pangasinan province, and my three brothers are all employed in the government.

> "Death is the destiny of every man, but not everyone is given the privilege of dying meaningfully for his country."

I sympathize with the family of Angelo dela Cruz. I know the pain of losing somebody you depend on. Angelo dela Cruz's family must be feeling that all doors closing on them now. If they would only look closely — how many OFWs have died in Iraq, in the Middle East or in other parts of this globe because they were working to give a future for their families? Countless and nameless. Most of them are mere statistics now. But Angelo dela Cruz is not. His situation caught the attention of the Filipinos, the Filipino Muslims and the rest of the world.

Death is the destiny of every man, but not everyone is given the privilege of dying meaningfully for his country.

To the children of Angelo dela Cruz: If your father dies, he would die fighting terror – a global threat that has united the world to come together and fight evil. *His death could make an impact on the whole world. That is a privilege and an honor that no amount of money could buy. If he survives, then his problem remains: How will he inspire his family to strive hard so they do not simply depend on him? The latter is a serious message that no militant cares about.*

However, I want to impart a more important message to the other OFW families, especially to the children that are sent to school by the blood, sweat and tears of the millions of Angelo de la Cruzes still out there, fighting their way to survive all the threat on their life and sanity.

I beg you to study hard, so that if ever you have to work out of the country, you do not have to remain as lowly employees ***but excellent and respected ones.*** *Better yet, so you do not need to go abroad and work away from your family. We can live decent lives in this country. Study hard so that the sacrifices of your parents bear fruit.*

Lastly, to the OFWs all over the world: Keep on communicating with your children. Compel your children to study hard. Do not give in to their whims, instead, invest in their education.

I hope that through this message, other OFWs and their families will be inspired and challenged.

And let us hope that we hear more of these kinds of courageous stories of character rising above the harsh realities of life. Times of crisis are actually opportunities to search for real heroism; times of weakness are actually opportunities to build inner strength; times of darkness are actually opportunities to make our light shine to guide others.

Bury a person in the snows of Valley Forge, and you have a George Washington. Raise him in abject poverty, and you have an Abraham Lincoln. Strike him down with infantile paralysis, and he becomes a Franklin D. Roosevelt. Burn him so severely that the doctors say he will never walk again, and you have a Glenn Cunningham, who set the world's one-mile record in 1934. Have him or her born black in a society filled with racial discrimination, and you have a Booker T. Washington, a Marian Anderson, a George Washington Carver, or a Martin Luther King, Jr. Call him a slow learner and retarded, and write him off as ineducable, and you have an Albert Einstein.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said, *"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."*

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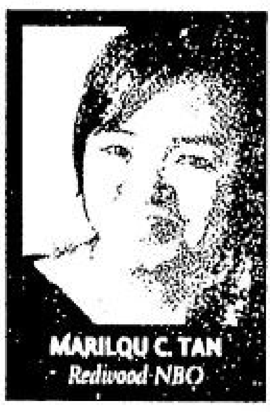
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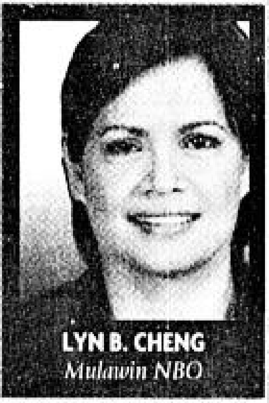
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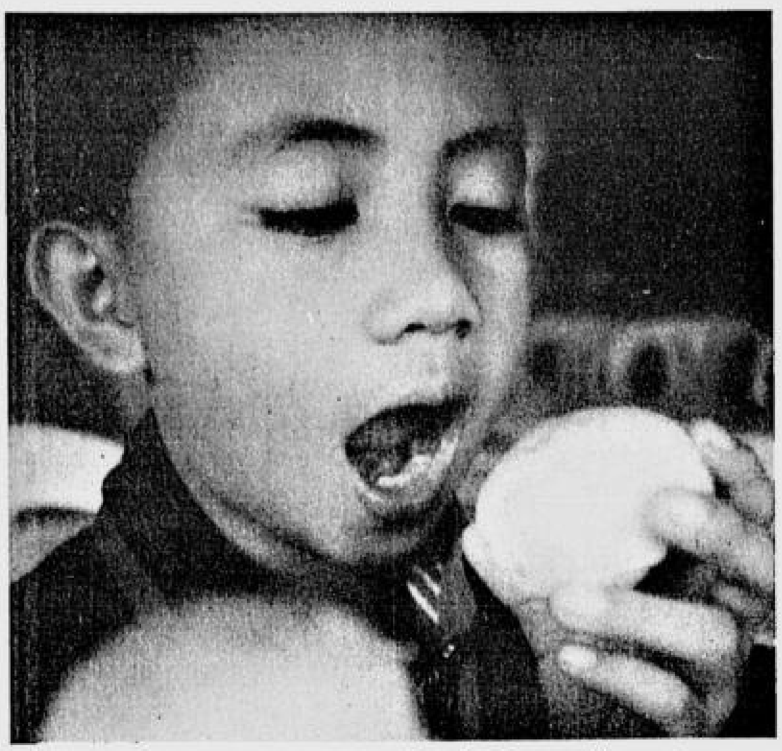

ARDEY Rimando, 10, a Grade 5 pupil at the Quezon Elementary School in Baguio City, takes a bite of "Nutribun," an offering of a breakfast feeding program of the nongovernment organization Kataguan Watch. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

From page A1

students of the Baguio City National High School before they go to their classes.

Next in her morning routine is lugging pots and ladles to the BCNHS home economics building so she can cook soup to go with the buns. At 7 a.m., she is joined by some friends, and they serve the simple meal to first-year students, who queue eagerly.

Torres' group is called Kataguan Watch, and this undertaking is called "First Meal Project." The target: underweight public school students who are too poor to improve their condition. "Kataguan" is a Kankanaey term for "life."

Skipping breakfast

Torres told the Inquirer: "Many of these students do not eat breakfast because they do not have the time, as they live very far; or their families just cannot afford to feed them. We want to help them develop the habit of eating breakfast so they can participate more actively in school work."

Paul Fianza, KW board member and a BCNHS alumnus, said the project would run for one year. "But the situation is the same in other public schools in Baguio. This is why we want to expand the project after this."

He said his group focused on high school freshmen for a start because it was at this stage that students faced the most changes in their educational training.

Dr. Jocelyn de Jesus, BCNHS doctor, said selection of participants for the feeding program was conducted through a room-to-room information campaign. Of the 1,954 freshmen, she said, more than 100 were found to be underweight. And from the survey forms, it was also found that most of the subjects belonged to families with six to 15 children.

No to junk food

But a few also came from middle-class families where the parents were professionals—doctors, lawyers and teachers—De Jesus noted. This group declined to join the program. "Out of embarrassment," she explained. "They did not want to be teased by their classmates for being 'malnourished.' I wish this stigma could be removed. The important thing is for them to eat."

And eat well, of course. Torres said her group has further enlisted BCNHS' help by banning the sale of junk food in the school canteen. This is where the Nutribun redux comes in.

In the 1970s, Nutribun was part of the United States' food aid program to the Philippines.

According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Department of Science and Technology, the goodwill bread was prepared from soy-fortified wheat flour and distributed to schools and feeding centers. A later version was made from bulgur wheat and green peas.

Torres said the KW's version consisted of potato, milk, flour and carrots, and could compare with the original Nutribun in terms of the children's nutritional requirements.

The choice of the American bread as a yardstick was no accident. Torres and several KW colleagues grew up eating Nutribun in school, too.

"We have sentimental stories about it," she said.

Now, funds for the "First Meal Project" come from KW members and a few sponsor-friends. The program welcomes donors. Call Fianza at (0920) 405-1423: Nutribun-related sob stories not required.

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DOMINGO, Konde Luciano P.	Computer Engineering	Ateneo de Manila University
EMPLEO, Enrico Carlo C.	BS Mechanical Engineering	University of the Philippines – Diliman
IQUIN, Jerick C.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	University of Santo Tomas
LACSON, Carlos Miguel M.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	Ateneo de Manila University
PUNSALAN, Mary Ann A.	BS Management Economics	Ateneo de Manila University
REYES, Jenina Marie D.	BS Statistics	De La Salle University
ROGEL, Edward Andrew P.	BS Management Engineering	Ateneo de Manila University
ROLLAN, Rhett Albert A.	BS Mathematics	University of the Philippines – Diliman
YAP, David B.	BS Statistics	University of the Philippines – Diliman

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CARANDANG, Phrances Xharmagne C.	BS Information Technology	St. Louis University
CARANGUIAN, Luther Paul	DR. BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	University of the Philippines – Diliman
GARRIDO, Jerwin Demy E.	AB Mass Communications	University of the Philippines – Diliman
VELASQUEZ, Mon Ruiz S.	BS Electrical Engineering	University of the Philippines – Diliman

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ESTRADA, Erik John C.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	University of the Philippines – Diliman
JAIM, Mark Erben A.	BS Electrical Engineering	University of the Philippines – Los Baños
JOVEN, Rafael Francisco LL.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	Ateneo de Naga

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BAYAG, Ed Angelo C.	BS Applied Mathematics	University of the Philippines – Visayas
ESCLETO, Ceasar Ean S.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	Mapua

EASTERN VISAYAS (4 SLOTS)

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PALGAN, Mae Emmeline	AB Mass Communications	University of the Philippines – Diliman
PO, Nenette Marie M.	BS Statistics	University of the Philippines – Visayas
TUTOR, Kristoffer T.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	University of San Carlos

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LIPAE, Alexander Ian Y.	BS Civil Engineering	University of the Philippines – Los Baños

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MONARCA, Jeosid Dave L.	BS Accountancy	Xavier University
ROMUALDO, Kate Russel S.	BS Elec. & Comm. Engineering	Mindanao Polytechnic State College

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NAME	COURSE	SCHOOL
AJERO, John Primer P.	BS Accountancy	Silliman University
JARON, Joe Darryl L.	BS Accountancy	Ateneo de Zamboanga

(PDI – August 1, 2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23 & 28-30, 2004)

ARLENE Aguirre gazes at her son Carl after he was separated from his conjoined twin brother Clarence by the surgical team at The Children's Hospital at Montefiore in New York. REUTERS

Carl's so handsome...

From page A1

the hospital had invested so much [reported to be about $2 million], and his career, so to speak, was on the line."

"But the rest of the team was upbeat," he said. "The most critical part was when we discovered that a part of the boys' brains was fused together, [contradicting] the imaging studies. There was some confusion and stress."

He said the team called in the neuro-radiologist, who stuck to the imaging results. "After an hour and a half of deliberating, we decided to proceed based on what we actually saw."

Lopez, 52-year-old president of the Academy of Filipino Neurosurgeons and chair of the Department of Neurosciences at the Philippine General Hospital, said he was "just lucky" to have participated in what has been widely hailed as a medical milestone.

"Initially, the primary reason that I agreed to join the team was that the patients were Filipinos," he said simply.

For him, the journey to CHAM began in May last year with a call from Goodrich, an old friend.

Dorita Holland Urrata of Children's Chance Connecticut had called CHAM's attention to the Aguirre twins' case after she herself was contacted by Carmen Sarmiento of Philippine Airlines Foundation. Goodrich sought Lopez's help in assessing the case.

"We trained together at the Neurological Institute in Columbia from 1985 to 1986 and have since been in touch," Lopez said.

Goodrich had been to Manila twice, as a matter of fact—in 1994, when Lopez invited him to speak at the opening of the Craniofacial Center at the Philippine Children's Medical Center in Quezon City, and in 1998 for a holiday.

'Nothing's impossible'

The twins were brought to the Makati Medical Center within a month of Goodrich's phone call. It was the first time Lopez saw Carl and Clarence. "We took CT scans and I assessed the results," he said.

After the tests, Lopez told Goodrich there was a good chance that the boys could be separated. CHAM agreed to shoulder the cost of surgery, and PAL Foundation offered to fly the twins and their mother to New York.

Goodrich called his friend in Manila once more, inviting him to participate in the surgery. Lopez obtained a license to operate in the state of New York.

In November last year, Lopez was present during the second surgical procedure. And then again in mid-June, he was advised that the fourth and final surgery would take place in late July—which was later moved to the first week of August.

Lopez said he had no second thoughts whatsoever, knowing this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that he should not pass up.

Asked what his greatest learning was from the whole experience, Lopez said it was something that Arlene, Carl and Clarence themselves had "taught" him: "If you keep your faith, nothing is impossible. And that if you give unconditionally, someone up there will look out for you." *With a report from AP*

Tanong ng Bayan INQ TV ABC Tuwing Huwebes, 8pm

I-text ang inyong "fearless view" sa 2910. Pipiliin namin ang pinakamagaling na sagot. Ang premyo linggo-linggo: Isang 21" color TV set!
I-type: INQTV <ang inyong sagot>, <buong pangalan>, <siyudad o probinsiya>, tapos ipadala sa 2910. Cut-off time: WEDNESDAY, 6 PM. Winner will be identified during the InqTV program: Thursday, 8pm, on ABC.

text 2910 NEW

1-woman policy: Uubra ba sa machong Pinoy?

Narito ang ilan sa mga sagot ninyo. Text na!

"machong pinoy na may dcplina,isa lang uubra na. machong pinoy na wlang dcplina, 1, 2, 3 klang pa"
Frank Nasayao, Caloocan City

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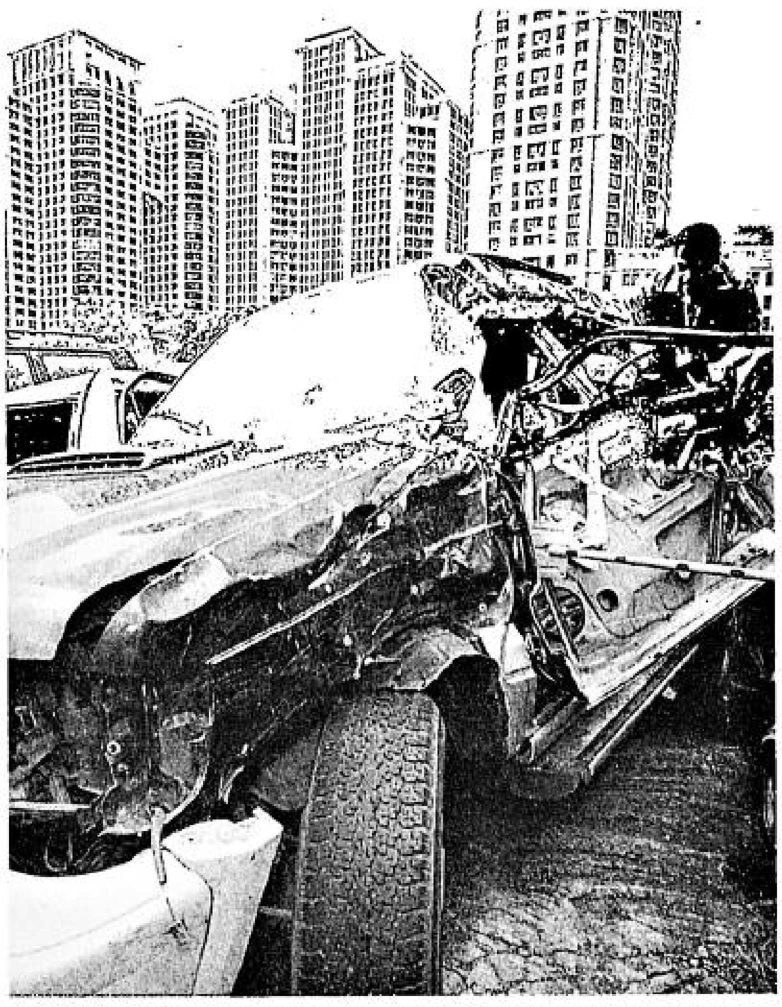
Desk Editors **Cenon B. Bibe, Ester G. Dipasupil**

Scalawag-hunters lead PNP awardees



THE WRECKAGE of the Isuzu Trooper of Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr. sits at the impounding area of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City. RUDY ESPERAS

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AMID the ailing image of the police, the good cops take centerstage today.

The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) will honor its policemen who have shown "exemplary performance and devotion to duty" in recognition rites in Camp Bagong Diwa at 9 a.m.

Leading the list of awardees are members of the so-called Honesty Teams, who will receive the citation of Medalya Ng Kasanayan.

Going after scalawags

Members of the Honesty Teams go undercover and investigate extortion complaints against policemen and other persons of authority.

They usually operate in civilian clothes, sometimes armed with only hidden video cameras.

The teams have arrested at least 117 suspected extortionists since they were organized in February, said NCRPO spokesperson Chief Insp: Bart Bustamante.

However, at least 53 of those arrested for alleged extortion were themselves policemen.

During today's ceremonies, officials of the Central Police District will also receive Medalya Ng Kadakilaan and Medalya Ng Kasanayan.

The awards will be for the "effective implementation of the civil disturbance management operations" during the inauguration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, a statement from the NCRPO explained.

The Mandaluyong police will also receive a unit award for exemplary performance for sustained anticriminality efforts.

Mandaluyong cited

Its chief, Senior Supt. Ericson Velasquez, will received the Medalya Ng Kasanayan for his leadership qualities.

The NCRPO will also give awards to representatives from the business, transport and media sectors, who have contributed to the police campaign against criminality.

Aside from the medals they will be getting, the awardees will be treated to free lunch after the rites.

But before giving away the awards, the NCRPO will welcome the 396 new policemen who recently completed their seven-month training.

The graduation rites begin at 7 a.m.

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Presidential assistant dies in Pasig City car crash

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A MALACAÑANG official was killed in a vehicular accident yesterday morning in Pasig City.

Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr., 53, Presidential Assistant for Resettlement, was killed when a Toyota Prado bearing a diplomatic plate (23370) crashed into his Isuzu Trooper at about 5:30 a.m. on the C-5/Ortigas flyover.

Ponce, who was driving the vehicle, was dead on arrival at the Medical City Hospital, said SPO3 Alexander Galang. His wife, Evangeline, sustained serious injuries.

The Prado's driver, Jason Ivler, 23, of Blue Ridge, Quezon City, was also seriously injured and was taken to the Quirino Medical Center.

Police said Ponce was driving toward Makati City when Ivler's vehicle, which was on the opposite lane, crossed the center island and hit the left portion of the victim's Trooper.

Ponce served as Manila councilor from 1988 to 1998 before he represented the 2nd district of the city as congressman from 1998 to 2001.

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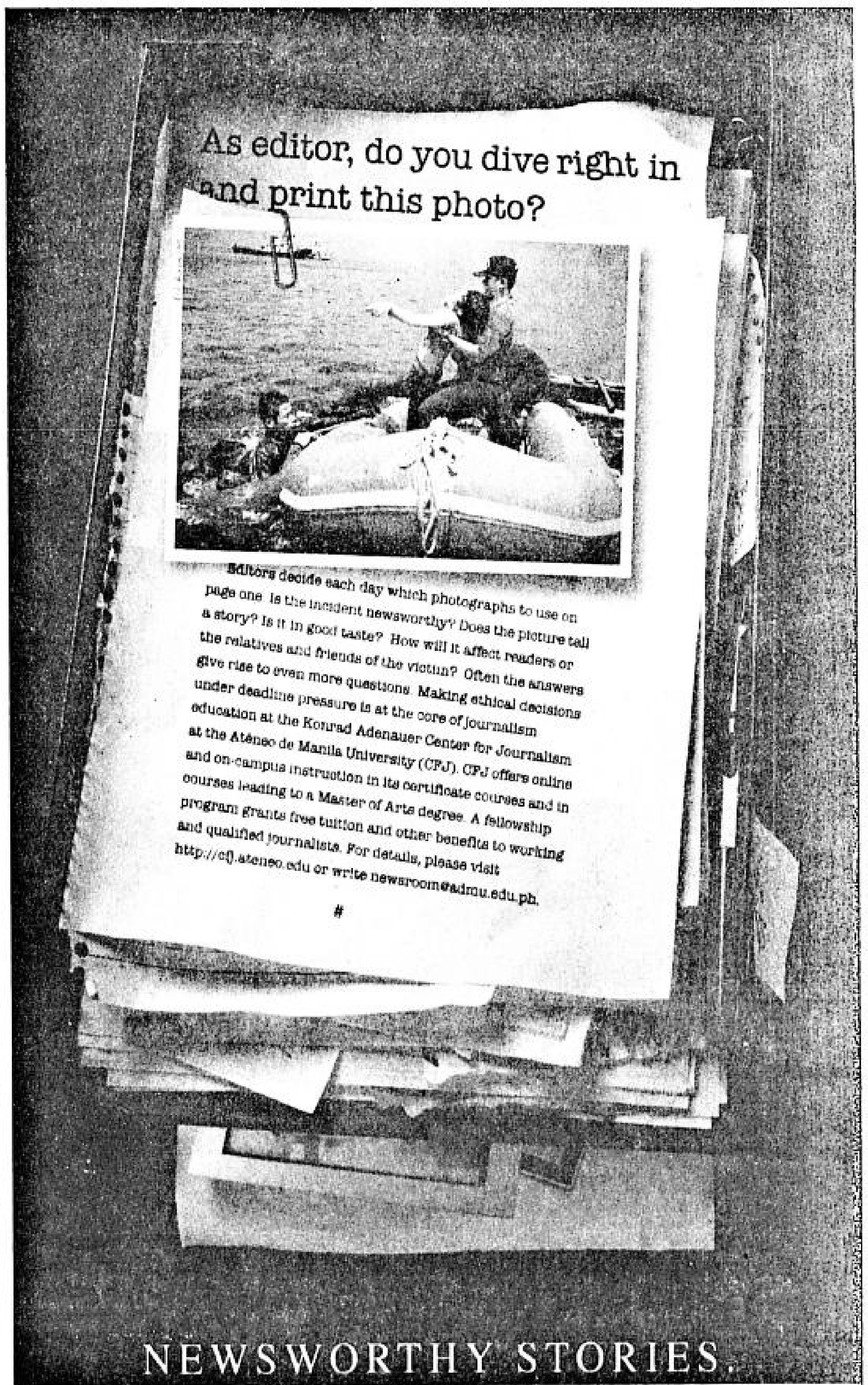

As editor, do you dive right in and print this photo?

Editors decide each day which photographs to use on page one. Is the incident newsworthy? Does the picture tell a story? Is it in good taste? How will it affect readers or the relatives and friends of the victim? Often the answers give rise to even more questions. Making ethical decisions under deadline pressure is at the core of journalism education at the Konrad Adenauer Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University (CFJ). CFJ offers online and on-campus instruction in its certificate courses and in courses leading to a Master of Arts degree. A fellowship program grants free tuition and other benefits to working and qualified journalists. For details, please visit http://cfj.ateneo.edu or write newsroom@admu.edu.ph.

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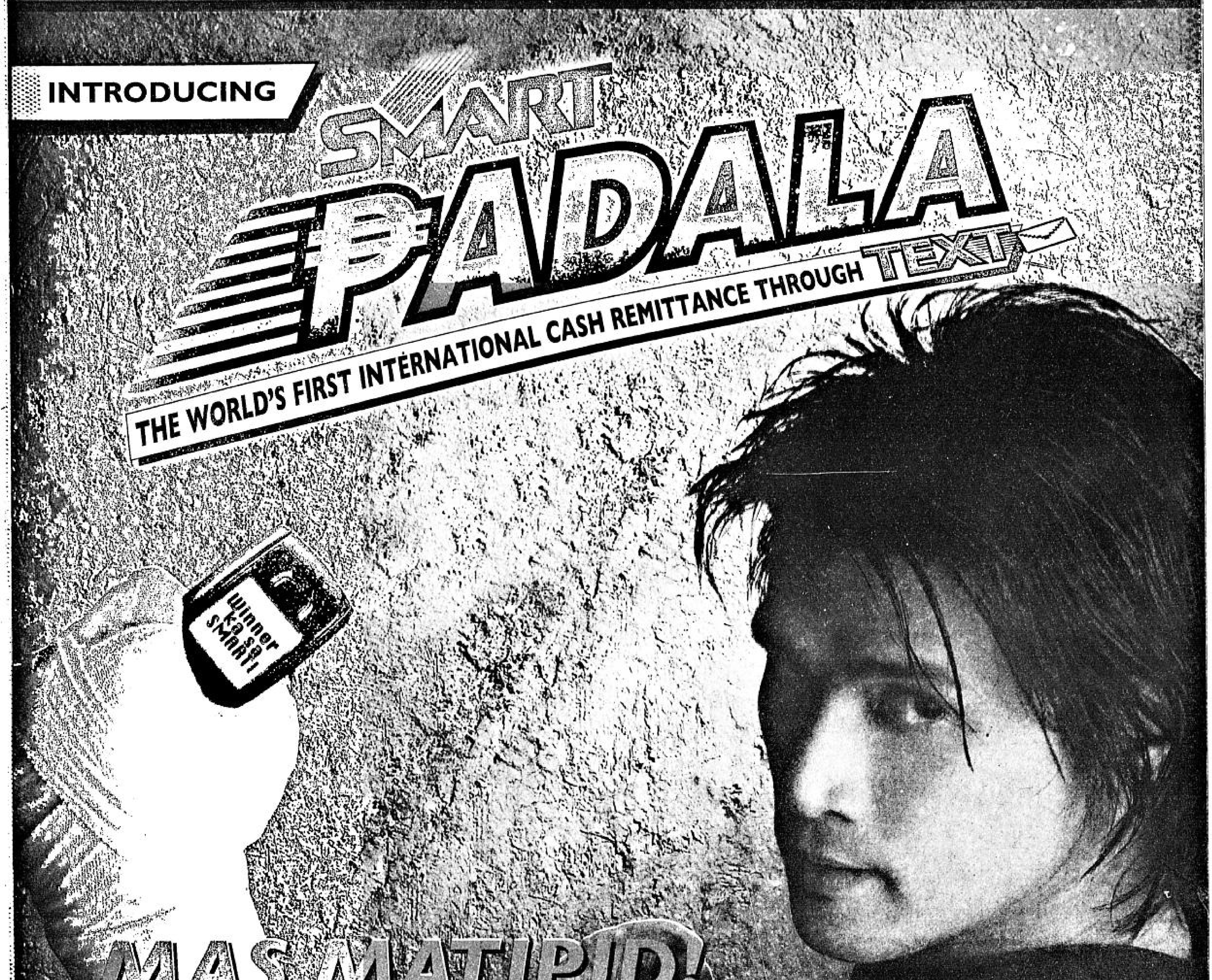
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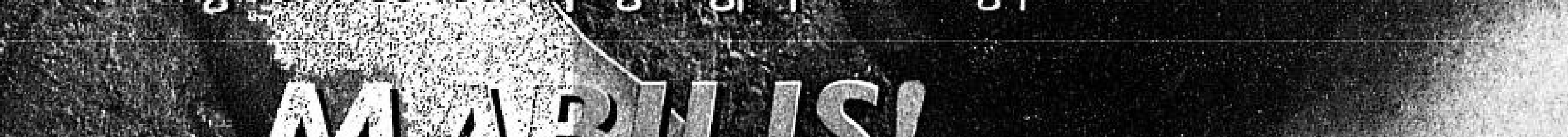

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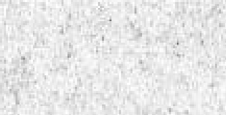

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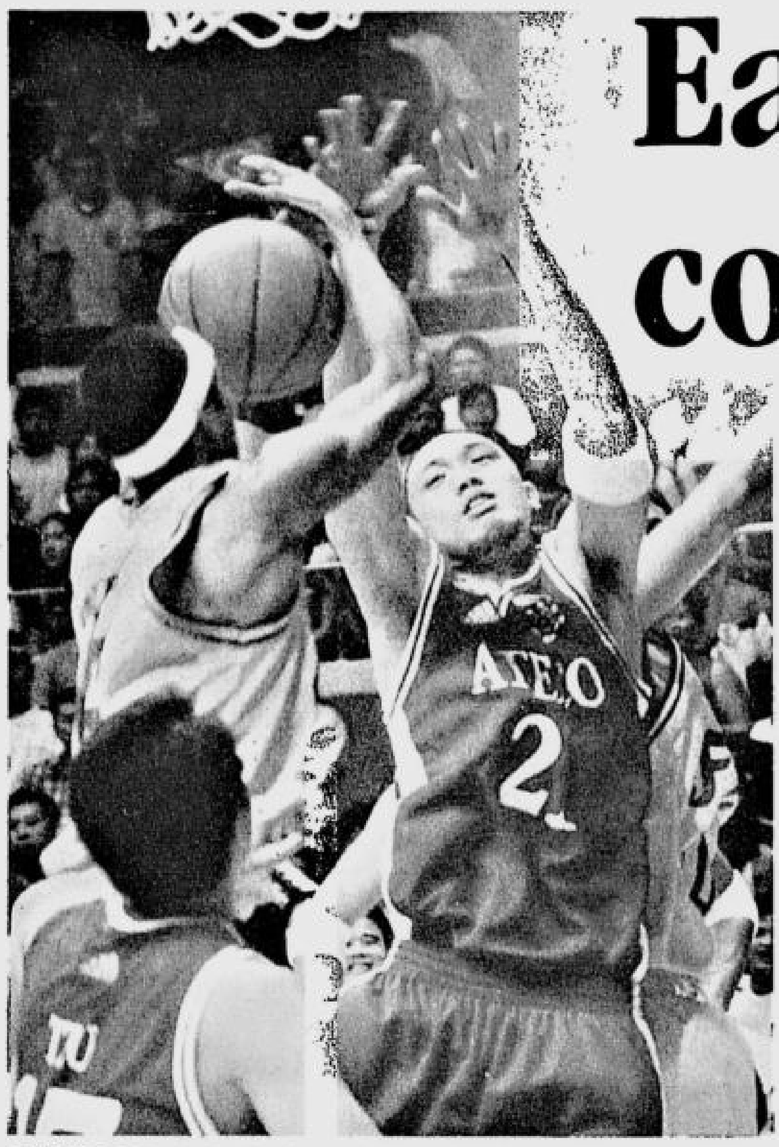
Eagles tame Tamaraws, complete 7-game romp



ATENEO'S Paolo Bugia thwarts Santos, FEU's top gun. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Jasmine W. Payo

NOT even the defending champions could smear the Ateneo Eagles' pristine record.

Slick-shooting LA Tenorio drilled home 26 points, including a three-pointer with 24.4 seconds left, as the Eagles conquered the Far Eastern Tamaraws, 67-64, yesterday to complete a seven-game sweep of the first round of the 67th UAAP varsity basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We trust LA every time the ball is in his hands. A big shot for a small guy," said coach Sandy Arespacochaga after the Eagles surpassed their best record for a start (6-0) in 1988.

Nine days ago, it was also a Tenorio triple, with 4.3 seconds left, that lifted Ateneo over Adamson.

Meanwhile, the University of the Philippines finally ended its six-game slide by repulsing fellow cellar-dweller National University, 69-56.

Despite the loss, FEU stayed at solo second with a 5-2 record while NU finished with the ignominious 0-7 slate at the end of the round.

GAMES THURSDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
1:30 p.m.—UST vs UP
4 p.m.—UE vs Ateneo

The 5-foot-7 Tenorio shot 17 points in the first half, including 12 from beyond the arc, to give Ateneo a 14-point cushion at halftime. But Arwind Santos and Dennis Miranda presided over an FEU rally, slicing Ateneo's advantage to 55-54, less than two minutes remaining in the third quarter.

A Miranda basket early in the fourth quarter put the Tams back up, 58-57. The Katipunan crew again wrested the lead, 62-60, but a putback by Santos tied the count, 1:30 remaining.

Tenorio's trey handed the Eagles a 65-62 edge, but a tip-in by RJ Rizada at the other end narrowed the margin to a point, 65-64.

Miranda fouled Chris Tiu on the next play, and the sophomore point guard calmly sank his two free throws, 7.9 seconds left, for the final tally.

The Maroons blasted the Bulldogs early on, leading by as much as 24 points, 59-35, midway in the third quarter. Veteran Toti Almeda led UP with 18 points.

In women's play, Diana Jose powered the Lady Tamaraws past the Lady Eagles in overtime, 63-55. Both teams joined the Lady Maroons in second place with 2-1 records.

EAGLES/ A32

9-hour ordeal for Filipino Olympic bets

ATHENS—Organizers of the 28th Olympic Games are doing everything to make the coming Games the best ever, but the first batch of Filipino athletes and officials here thought the Greeks have to work a lot harder to achieve their goal.

The Greeks can't fault the 10 Filipino athletes and officials who checked in at the Olympic Village Saturday for being pessimistic after what they had gone through for nearly nine hours.

Tired and weary after a 16-hour trip from Manila, the Filipinos had to wait almost the whole day before they finally got to their billeting quarters at the Blue Zone, Block F in the Andromeda area.

The reason? Chef de mission Steve Hontiveros and fellow officials Carlos Santos-Viola and Gus B. Villanueva met for five hours with Athoc's Luis Luis to iron out the remaining kinks in RP's participation.

Among others, the meeting touched on the final list of delegation members, billeting at the Olympic Village, access to various sports during the Games and participation in the opening ceremony.

Accreditation cards of the team members were validated only after the meeting. But when the Filipinos, by now hungry and sleepy and their energy sapped even more by the heat, were about to take the bus to their village quarters, the man handling the apartment keys could not be located by Luis.

It took almost three hours before the man showed up.

"*Paano nila lalampasan ang ibang* Olympics, particularly the last one in Sydney, *kung* billeting procedures *lang hindi nila maayos*," commented one of the RP coaches.

No doubt the Greeks are offering good quarters and good food. In fact, the 34-man RP team has been given a two-story apartment with eight two-bed rooms plus four more rooms in an adjacent apartment. But the hosts have yet to be tested on many other Olympics-related matters like the organization of events, distribution of results and handling of transportation needs by teams from 201 countries.

The days ahead will truly be crucial for the Greeks. The Games will open on Aug. 13 and end on the 29th. Opening day falls on Friday the 13th, which almost everybody believes spells bad luck.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Game—Bulls vs Lakers, Game 3, 1991 Finals; 7:30 a.m.; Solar Sports—Michael Jordan leads Chicago to a thrilling victory over Magic Johnson and LA.

Hakeem the Dream; 9:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Learn more about the career of former Houston great Hakeem Olajuwon.

Hardwood Classics—Mavericks vs Spurs, December 26, 2001—Relive this memorable Texas encounter between Dallas and San Antonio.

FOOTBALL: Arsenal vs Manchester United; 3 p.m. (r-12:30 a.m.); ESPN—Bitter Premiership rivals Arsenal and Manchester United go at it.

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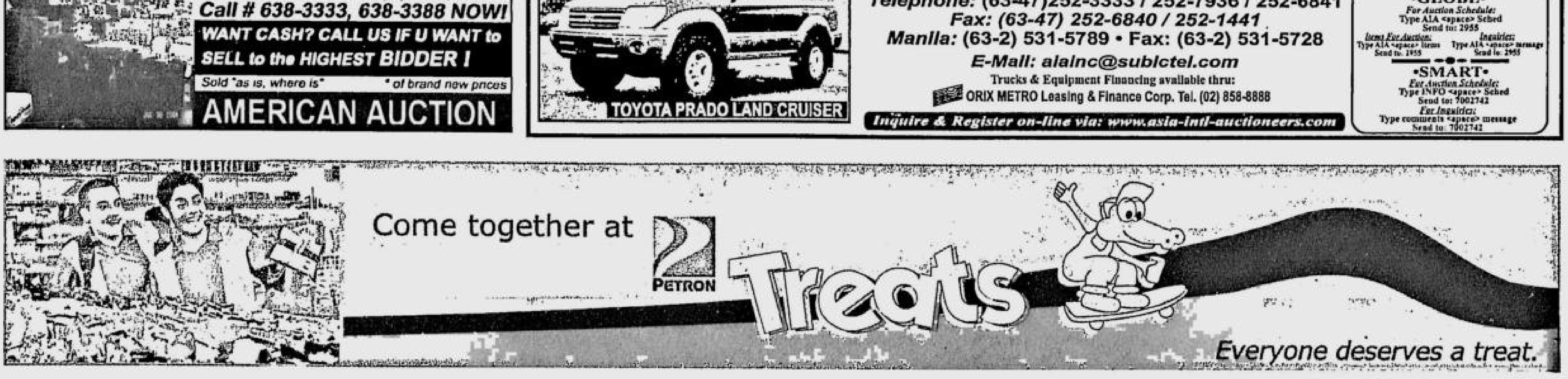


3 rookies reach Athens tired but excited

ATHENS—First-timers Timmy Chua, Jasmin Figueroa and Jethro Dionisio expressed delight and excitement as they arrived here Saturday morning together with seven officials of the Philippine team to the 28th Olympic Games set Aug. 13-29.

"Excited *ako, pero hindi pa ako kinakabahan. Wala pa kasing laban* (I'm excited and not nervous yet because the fights have not started)," said 19-year-old Figueroa as she claimed her luggage shortly after a 16-hour trip from Manila, including a two-hour stopover in Bangkok.

"*Totoo na ito* (This is it)," gushed 21-year-old swimmer Chua, who felt as if he just woke up from a dream. "*Noong nasa* Maynila *pa tayo kagabi* (Friday), *iniisip ko kung talagang sa* Athens Olympics *ako pupunta. Ngayon, paniwala na ako* (When we were in Manila, I couldn't believe that I'm going to Athens. Now I believe.)"

The 32-year-old Dionisio, a member of the RP men's trap team that won a gold medal in the Vietnam Souteast Asian Games, said he's just as excited as Chua. But he's also concerned that he "would need to see the range and train some more" because he wants to do well here.

Chef de mission Steve Hontiveros led the three rookies and six other officials who comprised the first batch of the RP delegation to this multi-event sportsfest.

The officials are coaches Ramon Jose Corral (shooting), Henry Manalang (archery) and Anthony Lozada (swimming), aquatics team leader Francisco Rivera, administrative officer Carlos Santos-Viola and press attaché Gus B. Villanueva.

Only 16 athletes will carry the country's colors here. The others are foreign-based swimmers Miguel Mendoza, Miguel Molina, Jacklyn Pangilinan and James Bernard Walsh, boxers Harry Tañamor, Violito Payla, Romeo Brin and Christopher Camat, taekwondo-jins Donald David Geisler III, Mary Antoinette Rivero and Tshomlee Go and track stars Lerma Bulauitan-Gabito and Eduardo Buenavista.

The boxers are scheduled to check in at the Athletes' Village Sunday after concluding their training in Bugeat, France.

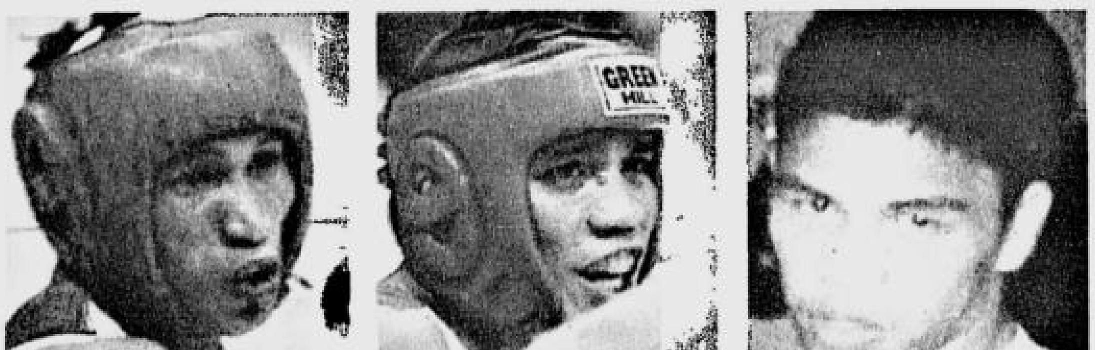
Gabito, who is entered in the long jump, and Buenavista, who will see action in the marathon, will arrive Monday, just a day ahead of the swimmers who are flying here from the United States.

Geisler, Rivero and Go will leave Manila on Aug. 15, giving them 10 more days of training before plunging into competition on Aug. 26.

5 DAYS TO ATHENS

Boxers prime medal hopes in Olympics

THE US Magazine Sports Illustrated has tipped a bronze-medal finish for Tañamor (right) in the light flyweight class. Below (from left), Brin, Camat, Payla. ROMY HOMILLADA



By Roy Luarca

ROMEO Brin was playing sandlot basketball in Puerto Princesa City when the urgent call came. He was being recalled to the Philippine team for the 22nd Asian Boxing Championship in Palawan after a regular member was struck down by the flu.

Leaving the game in a huff, Brin reported to the coaches who deemed him fit to fight despite being absent from the ring for more than 18 months.

Brin's passion for running, skipping rope and hitting the punching bag while teaching children the rudiments of boxing have warded off the flab and kept him in the periphery of the light welter category.

After three days of dieting, the 5-foot-7 Brin met the 64 kg limit and the rest was a magical, heart-warming run to the Athens Olympics slated Aug. 13 to 29.

Brin became the first and only Filipino boxer to make it to the quadrennial Games three times, having competed in Atlanta in 1996 as a lightweight and in Sydney in 2000 as a light welter. He went home empty-handed on both occasions.

At 31, Brin knows Athens is going to be his last stab at Olympic glory and is making the most out of it.

Together with light flyweight (48 kg) Harry Tañamor, flyweight (51 kg) Violito Payla and middleweight (69-75 kg) Christopher Camat, Brin spent nearly three months preparing on foreign soil.

They spent the first month shaping up in Bulgaria, most of the second in the Czech Republic, where they also competed in an international tournament, and the third in a training camp in Bugeat, France, from where the Philippine boxing team will fly direct to Athens.

According to head coach Loy Caliwan, Brin, Payla, Tañamor and Camat, who left behind a pregnant wife and a stable job as furniture consultant in the United States in pursuit of his Olympic dream, have gained tremendously from training and fighting against boxers who are also bound for the Greek capital.

That Bugeat, a tiny mountain village, has the hot, humid climate of Athens was another factor why Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny Lopez opted for the exclusive training camp, rather than actual competitions.

"We felt that the boys would benefit more being exposed to world powers like the Cubans, the French and Romanians," said Lopez. "There were little distractions and their training was more intense, more focused."

The team also includes coaches Boy Velasco and Pat Gaspi and reserve Joan Tipon.

Based on credentials, Tañamor and Payla have better chances of finally giving the Philippines its first Olympic gold medal since David Nepomuceno took part in the 1924 Paris Olympics.

Tañamor, in fact, has been rated third in his division behind Russian Sergei Kazakov and Cuban Yan Bartelemy.

Deprived of a medal in Sydney after producing bronzes in 1988 (Seoul) through light fly Leopoldo Serantes and 1992 (Barcelona) through light fly Roel Velasco and silver in 1996 (Atlanta) through light fly Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, the Filipino boxers are raring to bounce back.

After all, they have accounted for more than 50 percent of the Philippines' total Olympic medal haul with Jose "Cely" Villanueva contributing a bronze in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics and his son, featherweight Anthony Villanueva, producing a silver in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

Gopez sees end to long Putra Cup golf drought

NATIONAL Golf Association of the Philippines president Benny Gopez has boldly predicted a title romp for the Philippines in the coming Putra Cup, even if the team was completed just four days ago. The tournament is set to open in just over two weeks in Indonesia.

"Barring any major misfortunes, second place will be a failure for us," Gopez told the INQUIRER, optimistic that the country will end its longest drought in the event regarded as the official Southeast Asian team golf championship.

"We have not won the Putra Cup for a long time now. This will be our year again."

The Philippines last won the Putra Cup in 1996—its 14th—in Myanmar with a team made up of Gerard Cantada, Richard Sinfuego, Rey Pagunsan and Antonio Lascuña.

Juvic Pagunsan, who recently qualified for the United States Amateur championship at Winged Foot set next week, leads the RP charge for the tournament set Aug. 24 to 27 at the Imperial Golf Course in Indonesia.

The Filipinos will be trying to get back at Thailand, which beat them by six strokes last year in Brunei.

The team, which also has Marvin Dumandan, Jun Bernis and young Michael Bibat, will go into the final stages of preparations, and Gopez urged golf clubs to open their courses to the nationals.

Musong R. Castillo

IM Rañola ties for 3rd; Paragua, 4 others 6th

Final standings:

6.5 points—IM Namig Gouliev (Azerbajian); **6.0**—GM Davor Komljenovic (Croatia); **5.5**—GM Mladen Palac (Croatia),GM Miroljub Lazic (Yugoslavia), IM Yves Rañola (RP); **5.0**—IM Mark Paragua (RP), IM Ronald Bancod (RP), Roland Salvador (RP), GM Milko Popchev (Bulgaria), NM Rolando Nolte (RP), IM Joseph Sanchez (RP), and six others.

NEWLY installed International Master Yves Rañola deftly handled the white pieces to down Mats Orndhal of Sweden in the seventh and final round Saturday and gain a piece of third to fifth places in the Nice Open chess tournament at the Grand Aston Hotel in Nice, France.

Rañola tallied 5.5 points, the same output of third placer GM Mladen Palac of Croatia and GM Miroljub Lazic of Yugoslavia.

GM-candidate Mark Paragua and Roland Salvador failed to sustain their early forms and dropped into a tie for 6th place with compatriots IM Ronald Bancod, NM Rolando Nolte and IM Joseph Sanchez.

Paragua lost to last year's champion GM Davor Komljenovic of Croatia while Salvador bowed to eventual champion IM Namig Gouliev of Azerbaijan. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

PBA IN CEBU

All-Star cast shows changing of guards

ONLY a couple of familiar, old faces are back in this year's Philippine Basketball Association All-Star game, a strong indication that there is a changing of the guards as the league begins a new era starting in October.

MENESES

ALVAREZ

Vergel Meneses, the most veteran among the elite cast that will display the skills and grace that earned them fame and fortune, is back for his ninth All-Star appearance along with Kenneth Duremdes.

Now 35, the Aerial Voyager, as Vergel is known, says this year's All-Star to be hosted by Cebu City is going to be no different from past events as he promised to treat the Cebuanos with his breathtaking, high-wire stunts.

Meneses said he was grateful to the fans for giving him the second highest vote in the All-Star balloting that earned him a starting slot in the North Team.

"*Nagpapasalamat ako na mahal pa rin tayo ng mga* fans, *lalo na ang mga taga*-Cebu (I'm grateful that the fans still love me, especially the Cebuanos)," said Meneses, who is eyeing a record fifth All-Star MVP.

Noticeably, though, the only other veterans in this year's edition are Jun Limpot (8th appearance) and Olsen Racela (5th appearance) as Dennis Espino and Jeffrey Cariaso gave up their spots due to unavoidable circumstances.

While Meneses is still a certified crowd drawer, most of the attention is expected to fall on the young turks led by charismatic teammates Willie Miller and Jimmy Alapag—both making their second All-Star stints.

Overall, 15 of the league's young stars are seeing action in the 15th edition of the 2004 All-Star game to be held in cooperation with the Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau headed by Patrick Gregorio. And 12 of them have played no more than three years in Asia's first professional basketball league.

"This is a great indication that the league is moving well forward. We owe it to the fans and it's nice to know the players acknowledge it," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala, who got the approval of team owners to change the league's schedule this year.

Obviously, among the surprise choices were rookies Rich Alvarez of Shell and Purefoods teammates Paul Artadi and James Yap, voted starters for their respective teams.

The other rookies and first timers in this year's All-Star sponsored by Talk 'N Text and supported by Gran Matador, Accel, Viva mineral water, Air 21, McDonald's and Cebu Pacific are Junthy Valenzuela of Red Bull, Joachim Thoss of Alaska, Ronald Tubid of Shell, John Ferriols of FedEx, Dale Singson of San Miguel,and Enrico Villanueva of Red Bull and Tony dela Cruz of Shell, who took the spot of Espino and Cariaso, respectively.

Aside from the All-Star game, players will also conduct socio-civic activities at schools, orphanages and hospitals and appear in campus and mall tours and a couple of cause-oriented activities.

RP spectators on the receiving end again

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

(TOMORROW: This is one event the late literary great Nick Joaquin would've never missed: tomorrow night's book launch of Wilfrido Nolledo at the Conspiracy on Visayas Avenue, Quezon City. Nolledo's daughter Mimi, who flew in from LA for the launch, has not bared the book title. Nolledo, dubbed a successor to Joaquin, had passed away in California last year, ahead of Nick.)

***

HAVE publicists gone on strike?

You haven't heard or read about it, but the 13th KOI Karate World Cup, held in Athens last year, will be hosted by the Philippines and staged at the Megamall in Mandaluyong City starting Friday.

It's not easy to measure the magnitude of the event, but with 27 countries represented, it cannot be too insignificant so as not to merit due notice.

It may not be as grand as, say, the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games, but this forthcoming world karate championship is definitely big.

Please. Media are willing to help, but organizers have to start handing out details so we could help start inviting home fans to the event.

They definitely don't plan to hold the championship in secret, behind closed doors.

In fact, we've been told admission is free.

A total of 500 athletes, including world champions and European masters, not to mention terrific kids who would do the melodic kata, are entered.

You can bet a lot of those who may never hear or read about it would end up feeling cheated, deprived of a world event of great magnitude.

The same championship has been slated in Amsterdam next year.

***

Publicists were at work. So you were able to read all about the 30th Asia-Pacific Zone Pony Baseball championship at the Rizal Memorial baseball field last week.

The results were played up in the sports sections.

Admission was free.

Unfortunately, home fans who went out of their way to watch the series ended up regretting having visited the Rizal ballpark, site of many great moments in Philippine sports.

For starters, the RP squad ended up with its head on the ground after a 19-0 busting from the disciplined, precision-playing Taiwanese.

A bigger hurt of course came with reports of serious injuries suffered by players, with one Korean slugger reportedly left unaided, agonizing on a table with a critical eye injury.

What was, however, vividly showcased out there was the dismal state of baseball in the country.

It was not only in horrible shape. After suffering another savage strike out, RP baseball fell critically injured, writhing on the ground.

There, indeed, were kind souls, including those who organized the series, who have been trying all these years to shore up baseball in the country.

But efforts have been so far been flimsy to really put RP baseball back on the playing field.

By the way, Japan shocked Chinese-Taipei, 2-0, to top the four-nation series.

On the whole though, it was a most forgettable event as far as local fans, who themselves had to suffer as the RP team got pushed deeper down the ground by very superior competition.

***

What the fans don't see won't hurt them.

That baseball affair, you bet, should have been rightfully skipped or missed.

Right on. But, then, there was no avoiding the Taipei Jones Cup series, where the RP-Lhuillier team provided an even bigger eyesore for Pinoys, mainly our countrymen in the Taiwan capital, where the peppery Alex Pagulayan had earlier made us all proud with his triumph in the World Pool Championship.

No, unlike the RP baseball kids, the Lhuillier team that represented the country salvaged at least one win in its 8-game program (1-7).

The team's non-performance was, however, a total shame that should've not been shown on local television at all.

The RP team stand was so woeful it has led basketball scholar Antonio Te of Tangub, Bacolod City, to send in pointers for future Jones Cup teams.

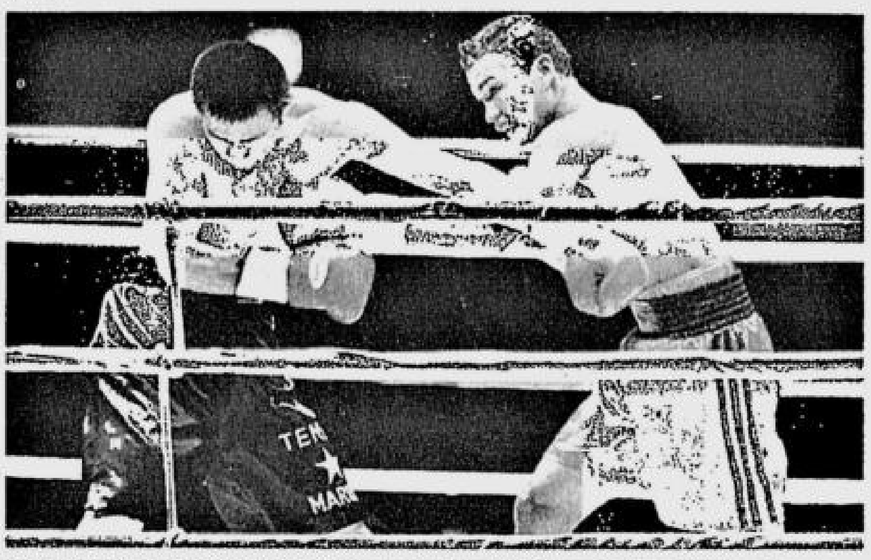
"I can only conclude that the drills the coaching staff made the players go through were mostly offense-oriented, obviously a result of lack of knowledge or appreciation of the importance of the Big D," he explained.

Mr. Te proceeded to detail the glaring flaws: Players on the weak side completely turned their backs on their assigned men; boxing out was not emphasized; there was no proper help-out and rotations, etc.

All told, the Taipei stint succeeded in showing the sickening flaws in the RP basketball system.

Home spectators were on the receiving end once again.

Santillan still OPBF welterweight king



DOUBLE KILL: Santillan (right) pummels Hiroshi Watanabe. The Filipino champ duplicated this win in April with a handy points victory over Marumoto on Saturday.

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation welterweight champion Rev "Gentle Giant" Santillan easily retained his title Saturday with a unanimous decision victory over Japanese challenger Taisei Marumoto at the Prefectural Gym in Osaka, Japan.

Santillan proved too much for the 10th-ranked Marumoto, displaying his vaunted skill while fighting under pressure to win comfortably in the scorecard of the three judges—Arnel Passion, 118-114; Hisatushi Miyazaki, 117-111; and RJ Tyong, 117-111.

Philippine minimumweight champ Elmer Gejon was not as lucky, however, as he lost by majority decision to Japan's Katsunari Takayama, ranked No. 15 by the World Boxing Association, in their non-title 10-round bout.

Santillan, who had regained his regional title by dethroning Hiroshi Watanabe in April, showed his aggressiveness throughout the contest, forcing the resilient Marumoto to concentrate on defense, said Japanese boxing guru Joe Koizumi, reporting for Fightnews from ringside.

The victory improved Santillan's record to 21-1-1 with 15 KOs. He is expected to go up in the rankings of the World Boxing Council, where he is rated No. 9, when the world body releases its ratings next month.

Up next for the Iloilo-born lefty is a clash with compatriot Dondon Sultan, the No. 1 OPBF welterweight contender.

In the undercard, WBA No. 7 Rogelio Galicia figured in a controversial split draw with Japan's No. 9 superflyweight Yuki Murai.

"Galicia deserved a victory," said Koizumi.

Japanese Ken Nakajima prevailed by majority decision over Filipino Ray Orais while another Filipino, Romeo Buhawi, was stopped in the sixth round by Zaiki Takemoto.

Salven L. Lagumbay

'Ninongs' needed to boost RP sports

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE COUNTRY'S sports leaders must not depend on government for assistance all the time because there are other ways to source out funds for sports promotion and development. The various national sports associations, for one, should raise their own money instead of perennially pestering the cash-strapped Philippine Sports Commission for help.

"The private sector will again play a big role as top benefactor of Philippine sports," said former PSC chair and Manila Mayor Mel Lopez as he lauded the support of his benevolent sponsors in reinvigorating the project "Quest for Olympic Gold."

Launched in 1986 by Lopez and his sportsmen-businessmen friends, "Quest for Olympic Gold" gave handsome cash incentives to 1988 Seoul Games boxing bronze medal winner Leopoldo Serantes and Arianne Cerdeña, gold medalist in the demonstration sport of bowling.

In 1996, the project also gave generous cash rewards to boxer Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, who won the silver medal in the Atlanta Olympics. Velasco also received some P2 million from the congressmen's countrywide development funds (CDF) through the initiative of Manila Rep. Jaime Lopez.

On the enormous strides of amateur boxing in the Philippines, Mel Lopez credited the hard-fighting boxers and the generous support of sports patrons led by SMC boss Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, a man of action known for his business acumen and love for sports. The other "Quest" supporters are Ernesto Yu of Family Rubbing Alcohol, plastics manufacturer William Gatchalian, TV mogul Carlos "Bobong" Velez of Vintage Enterprises, Vic-Vic Villavicencio of the Triple V Group of Companies and Pacific Concrete Products Inc.

Mel Lopez was succeeded by his son, Manny, as president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines. Under their guidance, amateur boxing flourished in the Philippines, with Abap winning the most number of Olympic medals in recent years. After Serantes won a bronze medal in the 1988 Seoul Games, Roel Velasco came up with another bronze in Barcelona in 1992 and then Roel's younger brother, Onyok Velasco, snared his silver in Atlanta in 1996, duplicating the silver medal of Anthony Villanueva in Tokyo in 1964 when Abap was then headed by the late bon vivant Eugenio "Gene" Puyat.

In this year's Athens Olympics, the boxing team, which arrived in the Greek capital ahead of the other Filipino campaigners for further training and acclimatization, is composed of light flyweight Harry Tañamor, flyweight Violito Payla, lightweight Romeo Brin and middleweight Christopher Camat. Right now, the boxers are in tip-top shape, in high spirits and ready to fight. Lopez oversaw the team's training at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and the PSC Training Camp in Baguio City together with the coaching staff headed by Roel Velasco.

"The boxers have improved tremendously. They now fight like world-class Cubans when it comes to technique, power and durability," said Lopez, who also took exception to reports that government officials and sports leaders are taking advantage of their positions by going abroad at the expense of the taxpayers.

"In all my years as a government and sports official—as a city councilor in 1963, assemblyman and mayor of Manila (from 1986 to 1992), as Abap president and PSC chair—the government did not spend a single centavo for my foreign trips," Lopez said, stressing that he had shouldered all his travel expenses.

***

OLYMPIC BOXING ON TV. Olympic boxing used to be the glamour sport among American television viewers. Boxing produced past Olympic champions such as Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard and the Spinks brothers, Michael and Leon, who won gold medals in the 1976 Montreal Games. During those years, Olympic boxing was widely followed and was rating high on TV. But no longer.

For example, during the 1996 Atlanta Games, NBC didn't show boxing during prime time. The bouts were shown only between 12:30 midnight and 2 a.m.

"When we put on boxing, we lose up to 75 percent of the female audience," once said NBC Sports president Dick Ebersol. "If you put on boxing in the middle of the greatest family entertainment in all of sports, you're going to drive people away. Women and children won't stand for it."

Boxing was not telecast on prime time mainly to please the women viewers, who, an extensive survey showed, made up 51 percent of the adult audience who watched the Olympic Games on US television. And what do women want? Gymnastics, more than anything.

Football refs course set

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation will hold its National Referees Course from Aug. 9 to 13 at the Audio-Visual room of the Philsports complex in Pasig City.

Cyril Dofitas, chair of the referees committee, said the seminar, which will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, is open to all top referees in Metro Manila.

The course will cover, among others, uniformity in the interpretation of the "Laws of the Game." Expected to grace the seminar are PFF president Johnny Romualdez and NCR Football Association president Santi Elizalde.

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Enduro San Mig Light Adventure Race Organizers Assure Safety of Participants

ENDURO San Mig Light Adventure Race Manila leg promises a race of a different caliber that will elevate the racers to new heights.

With new and exciting tasks, that await the participants who will roam Metro Manila starting from Eastwood City, the racers must not only be physically ready but also mentally alert for the arduous challenges in every station.

To ensure the safety of participants in the Enduro San Mig Light Adventures, the organizers will conduct pre-race skill tests that will assess the abilities of each team.

All participants in the Elite and Fun Categories will be insured even before the race begins, which is set on August 20-21 in Metro Manila.

The race organizers have gone through the route and have taken the race themselves to further assure the participants of their safety. Medical teams are also on stand-by during the course of the race to provide assistance.

"We're addressing all possible measures and are coordinating with all respective agencies in ensuring a safe race," said x10 Events' project director Richard Acenas.

Meanwhile, the Manila leg, initiated by right alcohol, low-calorie San Mig Light, will have a unique launching cum bar adventures at Eastwood City Fuente Circle on July 31 at 7:30 p.m. where selected media and showbiz personalities will be in action.

This event is supported by Tribu, Bombproof, Nextbase DVD, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Power-Up Gyms, Digital Thrills, TOBY'S, EZ Maps, Cousin Ropes, and JETHRO Shooting Range.

The media people and celebrities who will participate in this non-sequential bar-to-bar race will form teams of three.

Members will sprint around bars in Eastwood City and Libis, completing tasks that showcase their ability to drink, to think and to react.

Free airfare to Boracay and other prizes are at stake for the winners.

For queries or clarifications, please contact the Enduro hotline at 412-8660, or you can log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph

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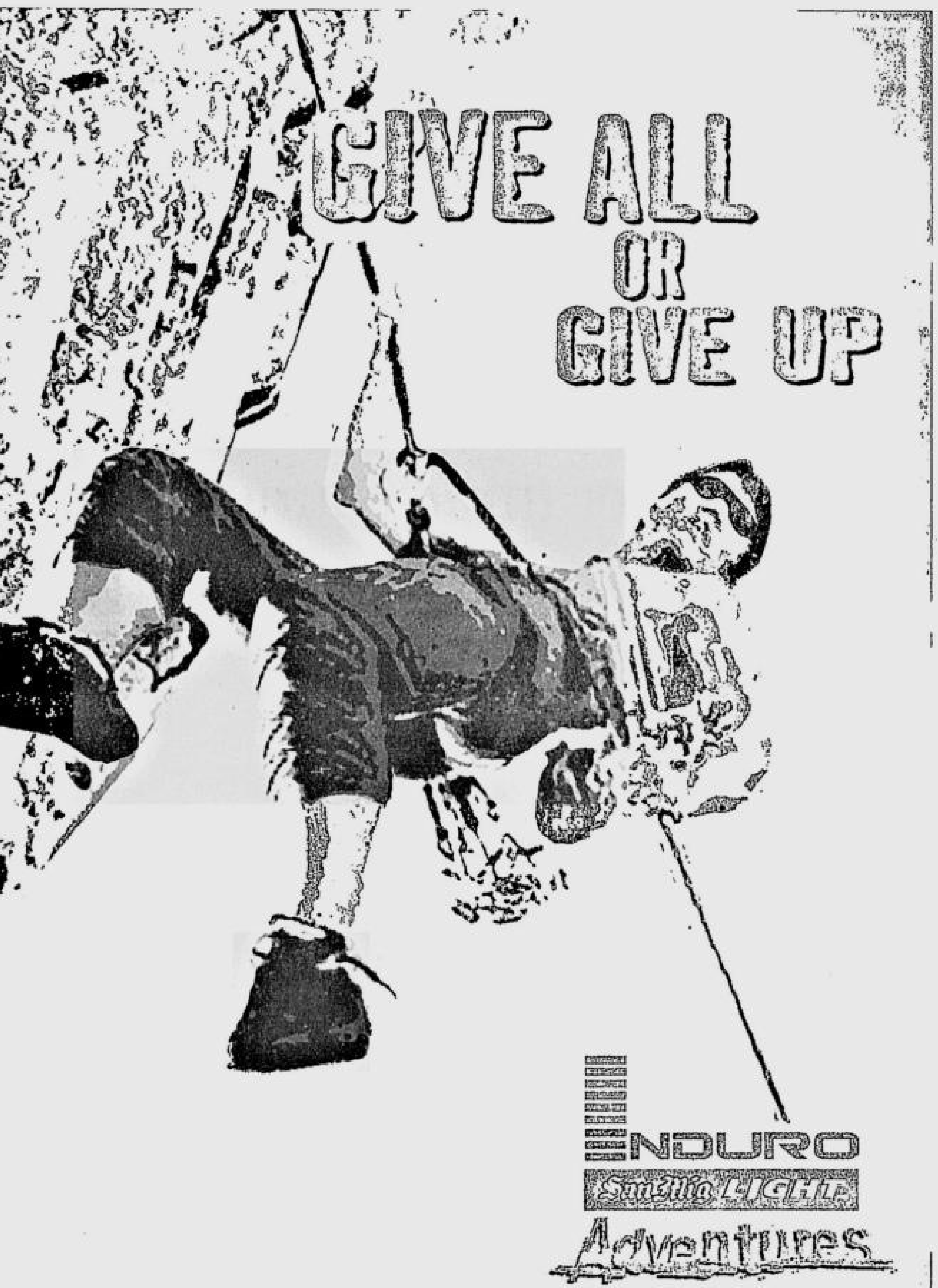

They're off! The Enduro San Mig Light Adventures is firing up its second leg. The fierce competition that started in Boracay now blazes on in Eastwood City. P35,000 awaits the winner of the challenging Fun category and P75,000 goes to the winner of the highly intense Elite Race. So if you feel like diving, biking, climbing, leaping, rappelling and competing this August 20 and 21, call 412-8660 or log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph to register. Smart and Talk and Text subscribers may also text ENDURO to 386.

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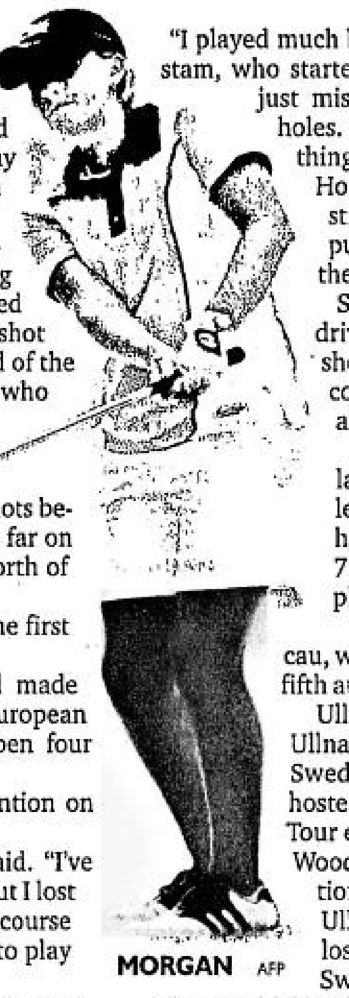
Koch, Morgan share HP lead; Sorenstam trails by two strokes



MORGAN AFP

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Carin Koch and Becky Morgan, who have a combined two victories on the Ladies European Tour, shared the lead with 7-under-par 209 totals Saturday after the third round of the HP Open Ladies European Tour event.

Koch, a Swedish LPGA Tour regular who played on Europe's winning Solheim Cup team against the United States in southern Sweden last year, shot 68 to match the second lowest round of the day while Morgan, a native of Wales who also plays on the LPGA Tour, had a 69.

Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam was alone in third place, two shots behind, after a 69 for her best score so far on Ullna's tough lakeside course just north of Stockholm.

Koch made her only mistake on the first hole, which she bogeyed.

"I hit my irons really close and made some putts," said Koch, whose last European Tour win came in the Chrysler Open four years ago in western Sweden.

Morgan has often been in contention on both tours but never won.

"Now I have the chance," she said. "I've never won in the States or Europe, but I lost a playoff in France once. I love this course and it's going to be really inspiring to play in the last group tomorrow."

Koch and Morgan will be chased by Sorenstam, whose 68 titles worldwide include seven majors and three wins in this tournament, then known as the Compaq Open.

"I played much better today," said Sorenstam, who started birdie-birdie and then just missed a third in as many holes. "I'm two behind and anything can happen tomorrow. Hopefully I'll start with two straight birdies again and put some pressure on them."

Sorenstam grew up a short drive away from Ullna, but she has not played the course since she was an amateur 15 years ago.

Janice Moodie of Scotland, who was tied for the lead with Morgan at the halfway point, slipped to a 72 and was alone in fourth place at 212.

France's Stephanie Arricau, who had a 68, was alone in fifth at 213, four strokes back.

Ullna, which sits along Lake Ullna, is considered one of Sweden's best courses and hosted five men's European Tour events in the 1980s. Tiger Woods played the SAS Invitational Match Play event at Ullna four years ago and lost to Jesper Parnevik of Sweden.

The world's top women haven't played there since 1982, when Nancy Lopez and Sally Little were on a United States mixed team that beat Sweden. *AP*

Stupples on track for 2nd consecutive LPGA crown

TOLEDO, Ohio—Karen Stupples, fresh from the first major triumph of her career at the Women's British Open last week, grabbed a three-stroke lead Saturday in the $1.1 million LPGA Jamie Farr Classic.

The English player posted a three-under-par 68 for a 54-hole total of 205, three shots in front of American Marilyn Lovander.

Stupples, 31, last week became the first Englishwoman in 13 years to win the British Open.

She had claimed her first victory on the US women's tour at the season-opening event.

"I thought scoring was quite tricky once again for some reason," said Stupples, who had led after the first round before falling back on Friday. "Maybe the pin placements were difficult to get close to. Then, 15-foot putts all day long and you really had to concentrate on your line." Meg Mallon, who won the US Women's Open last month, struggled to a 74 to fall into a tie for third place with South Korean Jeong Jang on 209.

Mallon began the day tied for the lead with Angela Jerman, who plummeted down the leaderboard with a third-round 78.

Lovander, a late bloomer who didn't take up the game until she was 19 and didn't turn pro until she was 30, has only played on the LPGA Tour full-time for two years.

Persistence paid off, however, as she played on the Future's Tour from 1986-99, winning 10 tournaments.

"You never give up," said Lovander, who has earned only $18,000 in 14 starts this year. "I have been improving every year, so I am still playing."

Stupples admitted she felt weary on Friday, but bounced back with a bogey-free third round.

"It definitely weighed very heavily on me yesterday," she said. "Every time you make a trans-Atlantic flight it always takes something out of you, but we are professional athletes. We should be able to cope with it reasonably well. I felt so much better today."

Stupples holed a 10-footer for her first birdie in the third hole. She sank a 20-footer for another birdie at nine, and holed a 15-footer for her final birdie at 17.

Filipino Jenny Rosales withdrew after four holes in the third round because of a recurring wrist injury, the same one that has been bugging her all season. *AFP*

Pampling catches DiMarco at helm after three rounds

CASTLE ROCK, Colorado—Chris DiMarco had eight bogeys and only three birdies in the third round Saturday to drop into a tie for the lead with Rod Pampling in The International, setting up what could be a wild finish.

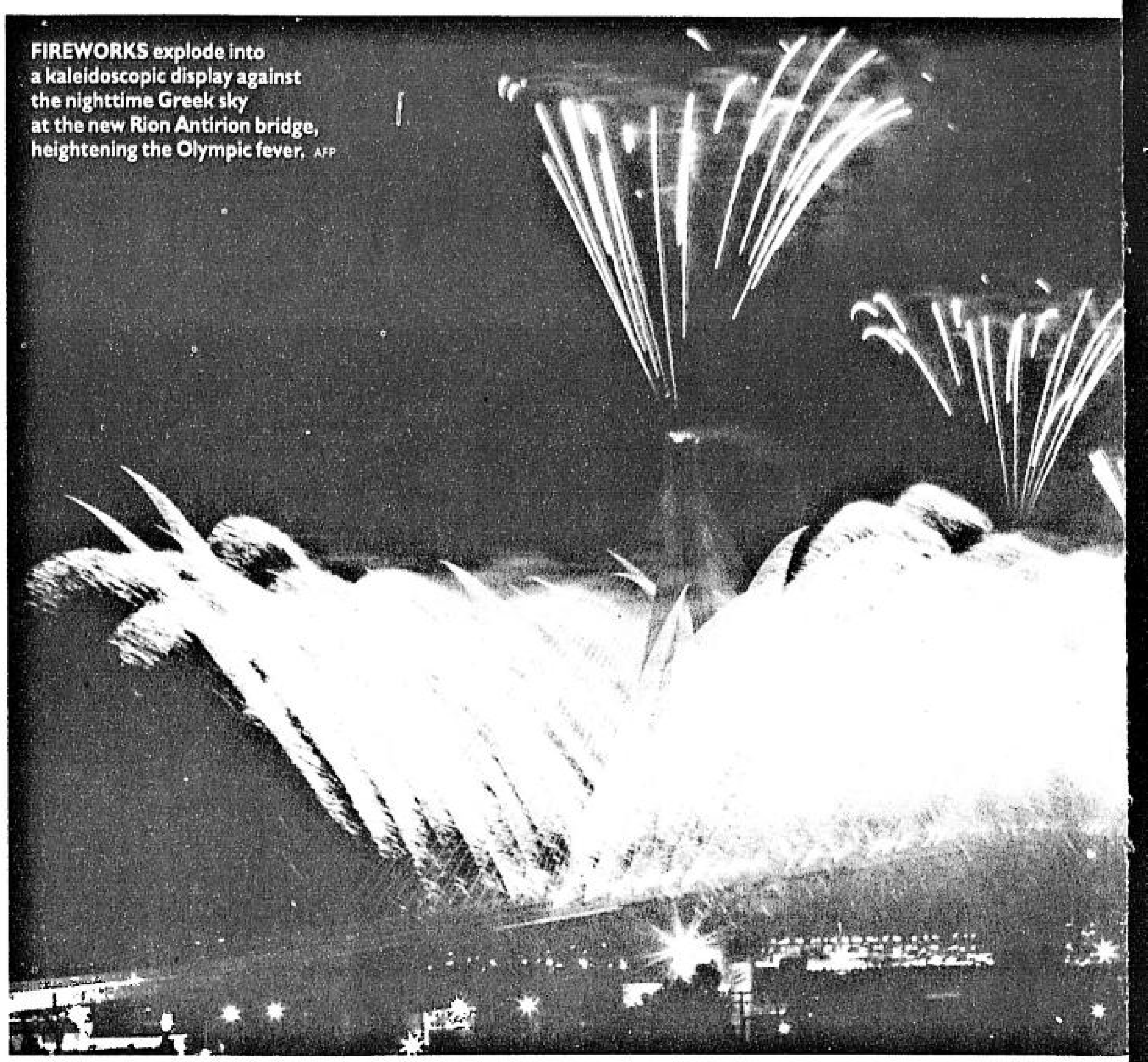
DiMarco, the second-round leader, appeared headed toward a runaway victory with 31 points and a nine-point lead in the modified Stableford scoring system event, but ended up losing two points in the third round with his stroke-play 77.

DiMarco's collapse allowed 17 players to move within 10 points in a format known for huge swings of momentum—from 8 points for a double eagle to minus-3 for double bogey or worse. Alex Cejka was two points back after a six-birdie round, and Tom Pernice and Bob Tway were tied for fourth with 26.

Half the field returned to the Castle Pines course early Saturday to finish the second round after three rain delays the first two days, and they were all chasing DiMarco—who opened with 14- and 17-point rounds.

DiMarco got off to a good start, opening with a birdie on the par-5 first hole to match Pampling. Then things started to go wrong.

He pushed his tee shot into a cluster of trees on the third hole, leading to a bogey, and lost two more points after pulling iron shots on 4 and 5. *AP*



FIREWORKS explode into a kaleidoscopic display against the nighttime Greek sky at the new Rion Antirion bridge, heightening the Olympic fever. AFP

BOOST IN SALES

Greeks finally snapping up Olym

ATHENS—Thousands of Greeks were queuing for hours on Sunday to buy tickets for the Olympics after organizers called for a boost in sales which initially had lagged.

With a record in daily sales broken every day in the past week, organizers were satisfied and surprised with the turnout.

"We certainly did not expect this. The response is just magnificent," a senior Games official told Reuters on Sunday.

"We are optimistic but we have to wait for the end of this coming week."

Until early last week, organizers had sold less than half of the 5.2 million tickets for the Aug. 13-29 Games, but with over 150,000 sold in three days, they were confident they would meet their target of 3.4 million before the Olympics start.

Central Athens ticket stands were crowded with Greeks notorious for their last-minute buying habits and organizers pledged to open four more selling points on Monday. Thousands more tickets are booked online and via the Games official bank.

The other four Olympic cities, which will host soccer matches, are also recording a sharp rise in sales.

The opening and closing ceremonies as well as most finals are sold out but tickets remain for most qualifying rounds.

"I already have several tickets including for the opening ceremony," one Athenian said, waiting in line. "But I'm buying more for all kinds of other sports I have never watched before, including hockey and badminton."

Forecasts that Greece, because of its geographic location and historic link to the Games, would sell more tickets than Sydney and more quickly, were initially proved wrong.

Growing security concerns and preparations marred by delays and infighting added to a drop in international sales.

But with the venues ready in time af-

Pope sends

CASTELGANDOLFO, Italy—Pope John Paul II said Sunday he hoped the Olympic Games in Athens, which begin next week amid tight security, would be free of tension and help promote peace and understanding between peoples.

Speaking to pilgrims attending the traditional Angelus prayer in his summer residence outside Rome, the Pope sent his greetings to the thousands of athletes and officials participating in the 28th edition of the Games, which start Friday.

"In a world which today is so often shaken and disrupted by so many forms

GOLIATH FALLS

Believe it or not, David won this one. Rick Roufus (left) defeated a much bigger and heavier Taro Akebono in the third round of the K-1 Battle of Bellagio III at Bellagio in Las Vegas. AP

Corrales foe quits, yields WBO belt

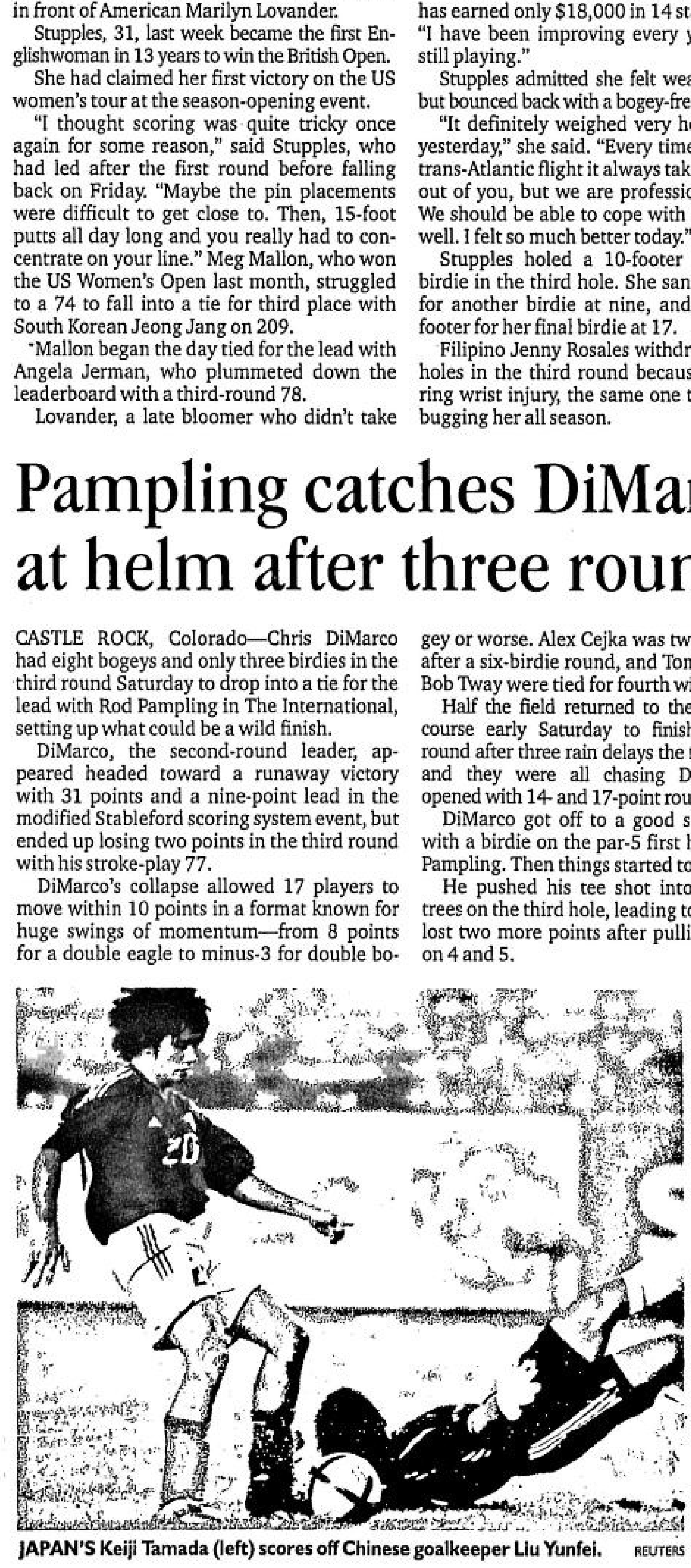
MASHANTUCKET, Connecticut—Diego Corrales took the WBO lightweight title from Acelino Freitas, stopping the previously undefeated Brazilian in the 10th round Saturday night.

Corrales, from Sacramento, California, floored Freitas three times, with the Brazilian telling referee Michael Ortega that he didn't want to continue after he hit the canvas at 1:24 of the 10th round.

"I figured he would get tired. He couldn't maintain that pace," Corrales said. "I knew if I kept my focus, eventually, I would close the gap."

Freitas (35-1) controlled the early part of the fight staying away from the stalking Corrales and using an overhand right to do some damage. After seven rounds, Corrales (39-2) was down big on all three scorecards.

But midway through the eighth round, a three-punch flurry on the ropes ended with a right hand that floored Freitas. *AP*



JAPAN'S Keiji Tamada (left) scores off Chinese goalkeeper Liu Yunfei. REUTERS

'Hand of Koji' gives Japan Asian Cup

BEIJING—It may not reverberate around the world in quite the same way as Diego Maradona's "Hand of God" but Koji Nakata effectively won the Asian Cup for Japan—and broke Chinese hearts—with a clear handball.

Japan beat hosts China, 3-1, in Beijing on Saturday in a politically charged final to claim their third Asian Cup title, provoking a furious reaction from Chinese fans.

Nakata scooped a Shunsuke Nakamura corner over the line in the 65th minute to give Japan the lead for the second time after the teams had started the second half level at 1-1.

Replays showed the midfielder had used his right hand to force the ball over the line, infuriating the Chinese players, coaching staff and a raucous crowd of 65,000.

The "Hand of Koji" could fuel as much heartache in China as Maradona's infamous goal at the 1986 World Cup has in England.

China coach Arie Haan claimed, with some justification, that all three Japanese goals were questionable and refused to collect his runners-up medal in protest at the officiating of Kuwaiti referee Saad Kameel.

"The first goal was a free kick to Japan that should have been for us, the second was handball and the third was after a foul on Sun Jihai," fumed Haan, whose team has never won the Asian Cup. "How can you win when this happens?"

Nakata himself said only: "I was trying to put it in with my chest."

The defeat was a shattering blow for China, which was arguably the best team in a tournament plagued by political rows, disciplinary problems and substandard refereeing.

Japan took the lead against the run of play in the 22nd minute after a dubious foul on Nakamura.

Takashi Fukunishi scored from the resulting free kick.

To add insult to injury for China, Manchester City full-back Sun Jihai was clattered during the buildup to Keiji Tamada's injury-time third in another incident not spotted by Kameel.

"Maybe I was watching a different game," Haan said.

"The final should have been for us, for everyone, a different ending—not the way it was decided."

Chinese anger spilled over after the match with a group of several hundred hurling bottles and burning Japanese flags as local supporters battled with riot police.

There is lingering resentment in China over Japan's military invasion and brutal occupation of parts of the country from 1931 to 1945 when tens of millions died. *Reuters*

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Agassi stuns Roddick, meets Hewitt in final

MASON, Ohio—Drop the retirement talk. Andre Agassi showed the kid—and everyone else—that he still has a whole lot left.

Agassi took another huge step in his late-summer resurgence, beating second-seeded Andy Roddick in an all-American semifinal Saturday night at the Cincinnati Masters.

"If you know one thing, it's not to write Andre Agassi off," said Roddick, the tournament's defending champion. "I'm disappointed that I lost, but part of me is happy. He let his racket do the talking, and it's saying something."

The 7-5, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (2) victory sent the 34-year-old Agassi into his first ATP tournament final since last November at the Tennis Masters Cup. He'll play 10th-seeded Lleyton Hewitt of Australia for the championship on Sunday.

Hewitt overpowered unseeded Spaniard Tommy Robredo with his serve in the other semifinal, rolling to a 6-3, 6-2 victory.

The evening match pitted two players with a warm relationship. Agassi befriended Roddick when he was starting on the tour as a teenager, but their meetings on the court have been generally one-sided—Agassi has won five of six.

This one meant a lot more to the 11th-seeded Agassi, who had to miss Wimbledon because of an inflamed hip, and arrived in Cincinnati still looking to regain his touch.

The three-set semifinal tested his stamina, his mettle and his confidence. He aced the final exam, closing it out with an untouched serve down the middle.

Then, he giddily skipped onto the court and acknowledge an ovation with a wave of his hand and a pump of his fist.

"Every day I'm answering questions about retirement—except for tonight," Agassi said. "That's my life right now."

Agassi moved into fifth place on the career list with his 807th career win, moving ahead of Stefan Edberg. He also gave notice that he's back in form with the US Open looming.

The second-seeded Roddick was his toughest opponent yet. The hard-serving baseline specialist had lost only two matches in his last 27, both to No. 1 Roger Federer of Switzerland.

Roddick grew up emulating the long-haired, "Image Is Everything" Agassi—he even wore denim shorts for matches. Roddick was 17 when he met Agassi, and lost to him twice. Agassi befriended the young American, telling him to call if he ever needed advice.

Now 21, Roddick has moved ahead in the rankings but still has a fondness for Agassi, who shaves his head and tries not to think about retirement.

"I'll be amazed if I can walk fast up steps at 34, much less playing at that level," Roddick said.

They pointed their rackets toward each other at the net in a good-luck gesture before warm-ups. *AP*

AGASSI returns a volley to Roddick on the way to an almost improbable finals stint by the 34-year-old veteran. REUTERS

pic tickets

ter years of speculation and the biggest ever peacetime security operation in Europe in place, organizers seem to have finally turned the corner. *Reuters*

s greetings

of hatred and violence, it is my heartfelt hope that the Games will be an occasion for a serene encounter and help promote peace and understanding between peoples."

John Paul II invoked the "maternal protection" of the Virgin Mary on the Games and on "the entire world of sport."

The 84-year-old Pope sounded hoarse and weak six days before he is due to undertake his 104th foreign trip—to the Marian shrine at Lourdes in France—but confirmed his intention to travel to France "God willing." *AFP*

US faces long journey to gold medal

ISTANBUL—The US men's basketball team has a long way to go to win the Olympic gold medal and see its games against Turkey as a chance to build on progress so far on their European tour, head coach Larry Brown said on Saturday.

The United States has started to look more like the team tipped as the favorite to triumph in Athens this month, romping to a 78-60 win against world champions Serbia and Montenegro in an exhibition match on Friday.

That match was a marked improvement after a narrow win over Germany and a 95-78 thrashing at the hands of Italy, the worst defeat since National Basketball Association (NBA) players joined the US team in 1992.

Brown told a news conference in Istanbul ahead of the two games against Turkey on Sunday and Tuesday that his players were young and inexperienced compared to the team which secured Olympic qualification for the United States in Puerto Rico. But he said they were getting better with each game.

"The competition has been great so the experience has been very helpful. But we have a long, long way to go if we are going to be successful in Athens. Hopefully the Turkish games will help us to make some more progress."

Two Turkish players, Hidayet Turkoglu and Mehmet Okur, play in the NBA and Brown said his players knew and respected them.

The US has won the last three basketball gold medals and 12 of the 14 Olympics they have competed in.

But the "Dream Team" tag has gone out of fashion—especially after the US lost three times in the 2002 world championships in Indianapolis and ended up a humiliating sixth.

Forward Larry Odom said the players had showed team spirit against Serbia and Montenegro.

"Everyone on the team is a superstar in their own right, so to play the right way you have to sacrifice something in your game to make the team better. I think last night we did that.

"Our defense has to be our best offense. Last night we just pressured the ball, we spread the game up a little bit and we were successful," he said.

Brown said the team was not underestimating the challenge they faced to win the Olympics. *Reuters*

THE US will rely a lot on Tim Duncan. AP

Refs doom Team PBL vs Egypt

DOHA, Qatar—Despite the best exhortations of its countrymen, Team PBL, showing a lot more fire and intensity, fell victim to atrocious officiating that allowed Egypt to escape with an 80-57 victory in the 2nd International Group Challenge late Saturday evening at the Khalifa Stadium here.

A total of 40 fouls were called on Team PBL as opposed to a mere 17 for Egypt, with five of the ten players used by coach Junel Baculi fouling out.

Egypt picked up 28 points from 41 free-throw attempts compared to just eight of 11 for Team PBL from the stripe. A phantom basket was credited to the Egyptians early on and numerous three-pointers by Filipinos were counted as mere twinners.

But what took the cake was when Cesar Catli was assessed a fifth foul even while he was seated on the bench. No amount of protests could make the table officials change the foul call, which should have been actually charged to Chester Tolomia.

"No wonder Filipino teams which come here always seem to get involved in fights," said coach Baculi. "They invited us here to boost attendance (Filipinos made up nearly 70 percent of the crowd) but they didn't give us a chance with the calls."

Nevertheless, Baculi was happy with the much-improved stand by Team PBL, which could not put up a decent defense in the fourth quarter due to foul trouble.

Team PBL had earlier rallied to cut Egypt's double-digit lead to just four, 49-45, late in the third quarter.

Mark Macapagal had 13 points to lead Team PBL, while Jon-Dan Salvador chipped in 10 markers.

World champs think 'Dream Team' can be beaten

BELGRADE—Serbia coach Zeljko Obradovic believes his world champions can play much better than they showed in a disappointing 78-60 loss to the US Dream Team on Friday as they aim to hit top form at the Olympics.

Serbia was hoping for a repeat of their 81-78 world championship win over the US two years ago, but instead got a nasty shock as a new US Dream Team led by Tim Duncan and Allen Iverson romped to an emphatic victory in an exhibition match.

Obradovic said the fans and his players had high hopes of victory after the US team's poor showing in a 95-78 defeat against Italy earlier this week.

"The coaching staff knew it would be a different ballgame and that the US team would be at their best against us.

"They'll improve with every game and we still have a lot of work to do," he said.

"But this was a far cry from our best performance and we can play a lot better. It is important that we hit top form at the Olympics," he added.

After the Italy fiasco and an unimpressive 80-77 win over Germany, the US produced the best performance of their European tour against the Serbs and looked more like the team tipped as clear favorites to win the Olympic gold.

Jeered by a raucous 16,254 home crowd when they walked into the Belgrade Arena, the US team got a standing ovation at the final buzzer for a series of dunks, alley-hoops and no-look passes that stunned the hosts.

Serbia-Montenegro top scorer Igor Rakocevic poured in 18 points and stood out along with captain Dejan Bodiroga, who had 14, three rebounds and four assists. But Rakocevic admitted the world champions had put in a below-par performance.

"We lost by 18 points but it could have been a lot worse considering how badly we played. We had too much respect for them but that won't be the case next time we meet.

"They scored too many easy points on fast breaks while our execution in offense was nothing short of disastrous."

Serbia-Montenegro shot only 1-of-14 from three-point range and 17-of-26 from the foul line, having committed 17 turnovers, and were outrebounded by their more athletic rivals in the paint.

Duncan led an impressive US team effort with 16 points, 12 of them in the first half. *Reuters*

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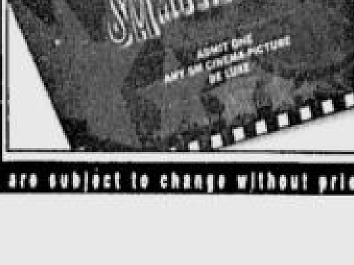

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RP champ vies for crown today

PHILIPPINE junior flyweight champion Bert Batawang plunges into action today when he challenges Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation 108-lb titleholder Shingo Yamaguchi in a 12-round battle in Tokyo's Korakuen Hall.

This will be Batawang's first crack at the OPBF title, while Yamaguchi will be making the second defense of the title he won on points from Filipino Wyndel Janiola.

Batawang flew to Japan last Saturday accompanied by manager Sammy "Don King" Gello-ani, trainer Moray Quijano and Filipino fight judge Ben Necesario.

"I have done my part in preparing for this fight. Let's see if I can convert it into winning effort," said Batawang.

Batawang parades a 30-10-3, 24 KOs card, while Yamaguchi has a 15-3-2, 7 KOs slate. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

PATAKBONG PINOY
Army Cpl. Douglas Urbino (left) shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Ricardo Brillantes after receiving his cash prize and medal as men's champion in the recent Beam Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy at Fort Bonifacio. Pfc. Odette Bernardino ruled the women's class of the 5-km race. Organizers will hold another race at the camp for students of the University of Makati on Aug. 22.

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Manila adidas tennis listing on

VISITING players from Germany and Saudi Arabia will be in the fold when the adidas Tennis Challenge completes its nationwide tour with its Manila leg starting Saturday at the Yñarez Sports and Cultural Complex in Pasig City.

Philippine Tennis Association officer Romeo Magat and Milo sports chief Pat Goc-ong will be joined by adidas executives John Alonte and Goody Custodio as guests during the opening ceremonies starting at 8 a.m.

The adidas netfest is organized by Children's Tennis Workshop, supported by Globe and Milo, and sanctioned by the Philta.

Deadline for registration is on Friday. For inquiries, call tournament referee Rene Selmar at 0921-2714061.

The featured events are the junior men's and women's (21-under) classes and separate 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions for boys and girls.

Banding for RAY derby starts

THE MONTH-LONG screening of stags seeing action in the prestigious RAY Showdown 7-Stag Derby kicked off last Wednesday in Laguna with respected roosterman Mimi Itchon and Negros Gamefowl Breeders Association president Juancho Aguirre tasked with supervising the banding process. Hosted by Danny Ty and lawyer Romero Yu, in cooperation with Thunderbird Bexan-XP, the 18th annual showdown will be held at the Roligon Mega Cockpit on Sept. 4, 6 and 8. Also backing the event are Casino Filipino and Lakpue Drug Inc. The screening team is now in San Pablo City to check on game farms, including those of Sonny Lagon, Patrick Puno, Pol Estrellado, Blandy Tolentino, Manny Santos, Pete Rodriguez, Jun Mendoza and Boy Marzo. In order to qualify, a stag must not be older than 10 months with seven primary feathers as well as uncut and untampered spur. Stags banded by NGBA, GF-BAN, Ucap, Migba and Pagba, LG-BA, Icba will be accepted, but should be presented beforehand for proper banding and categorization. A P1-million prize purse is up for grabs for an entry fee of P18,000 and a minimum bet of P7,700. For screening appointments, breeders may call 833-2275/8331638 or 0920-3074225.

MILO MARATHON

Ageless Antoque tops 'Gapo qualifying

ANTOQUE pours it on at the 10-km mark.

OLONGAPO CITY—Veteran Rey Antoque, known as local running's "Old Warrior," yesterday claimed his 10th regional leg title and booked a return trip to the 28th National Milo Marathon finals.

"*Pinaghandaan ko talaga ito dahil gusto kong patunayan na kaya ko pa* (I prepared hard for this because I want to prove that I can still win)," said the 48-year-old Antoque of the Philippine Army, who won the National Milo Marathon in 1992.

"*Nag*-seventh *ako sa* National (Finals) last year, *ngayon pipilitin kong makakuha ng mas mataas na puwesto* (I was seventh last year, now I want a higher finish)."

Not easy

But ruling yesterday's qualifying race was not easy. He needed to outsprint two runners almost half his age in the last 100 meters of the 21-km course to win the crown.

Antoque clocked one hour, 19 minutes and 14 seconds. Second placer Joseph Rosete, 25, came in five seconds later, while Jujet de Asis, 23, placed third in 1:19:20.

Like Antoque, Rosete and de Asis also advanced to the National Finals of this race held in partnership with Cebu Pacific, Bayview Park Manila, Globe Handyphone, adidas and the Department of Tourism.

Maria Elena Torcelino, a former leg winner, dominated the women's race to post her sixth regional title.

The 29-year-old Torcelino, who placed runner-up in the 1991 National Finals, clocked 1:38:02, more than 29 minutes ahead of second placer Ermitha Arigo and 39 minutes ahead of third placer Norma Maranion.

Torcelino, Arigo and Maranion also made it to the 42-km National Finals slated on Nov. 14 in Metro Manila.

Antoque led all the way, although he could not shake off Rosete and de Asis until he poured it on nearing the finish line.

Mamerto Corpuz actually beat Antoque here last year, but Corpuz opted to run—and qualified—in the Metro Manila leg last July 25, paving the way for Antoque to reclaim his Olongapo City crown.

Knee injury

Torcelino, a PE teacher, said he had to favor an old knee injury, adding she was lucky there was no strong opposition this time.

Topping the 5-km fun run were Jeverson Galvez and Krista Manilag, while the winners in the 3-km age-group race were Jason Alonzo and Rowena de Torres (6-9 years old) and Russel Martinez and Raissa Ortiz (10-12 years old).

UM Hawks pick up 5th straight victory; New Era outhustles STI

THREE-TIME champion University of Manila played just hard enough to turn back AMA Computer University-Quezon City, 77-65, and extend its winning streak to five games in the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (NAASCU) men's basketball tournament at the UM gym.

Ryan Regalado led four players who scored in double figures for the Hawks, who moved within three games of completing a sweep of the first round of the eliminations.

Regalado finished with 24 points for the Hawks, who needed only one long scoring splurge in the second quarter to break the game wide open.

Billy John Lechadores paced the Titans with 12 markers.

New Era University humbled STI College, 74-69, to join St. Clare College and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay in a three-way tie for third to fifth places with similar 3-2 win-loss cards.

Jeffrey de Guzman, Christopher Ramos, Karlo Maynes, William Ibay and Don Joseph Perlas combined for 60 points for the Hunters.

University of Makati, which downed PLP, 97-91, on the heroics of Gerald Lorica on Saturday, kept second place with three victories and one defeat.

GAMES TOMORROW (*UM Gym*)
8 a.m.—CEU vs. New Era
10:30 a.m.—Holy Angel vs. St. Clare
12 nn.—AMA vs. PLP
1:30 p.m.—Univ. of Makati vs. STI

The scores:

First Game

UM 77—Regalado 24, Salem 17, Vidanes 10, Gomez 10, Bernados 8, Santiago 5, Ocampo 2, Litonjua 2, Uao 0, Facun 0, De los Trinos 0.

AMA 65—Lechadores 12, Cruz 10, Dublin 8, Panahon 8, Ramos 6, Deblois 6, Ober 4, Zablan 4, Sta. Maria 3, Yap 2, Villasin 2, Suarez 0.

Quarterscores: 18-13, 44-26, 63-41, 77-65.

Second Game

NEW ERA 74—De Guzman 15, Ramos 14, Maynes 11, Ibay 10, Perlas 10, Lapid 4, Alastre 4, Casantusan 4, Gascon 2, De la Cruz 0.

STI 69—Tintero 23, Martin 10, Buncan 10, Cateron 10, Dia 9, Botin 6, Del Rosario 5, Medallo 0, Castro 0.

Quarterscores: 14-19, 35-38, 49-48, 74-69.

THEATER
MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MAKAMUNDO
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	MAKAMUNDO
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, & 3	GARFIELD / COLLATERAL / CATWOMAN
PREMIERE THEATRE	COLLATERAL

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	GHOST HOUSE (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-2	PERLAS
CINEMA-3	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PRINCE & ME
CINEMA-6	KILL BILL VOL. 2
CINEMA-7	WEREWOLF
CINEMA-8	LIBERATED 2
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I ROBOT
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-12	KING ARTHUR
CINEMA-14	ALONG CAME POLLY
CINEMA-15	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-1	LADY KILLERS
CINEMA-2	I ROBOT
CINEMA-4	RESERVED

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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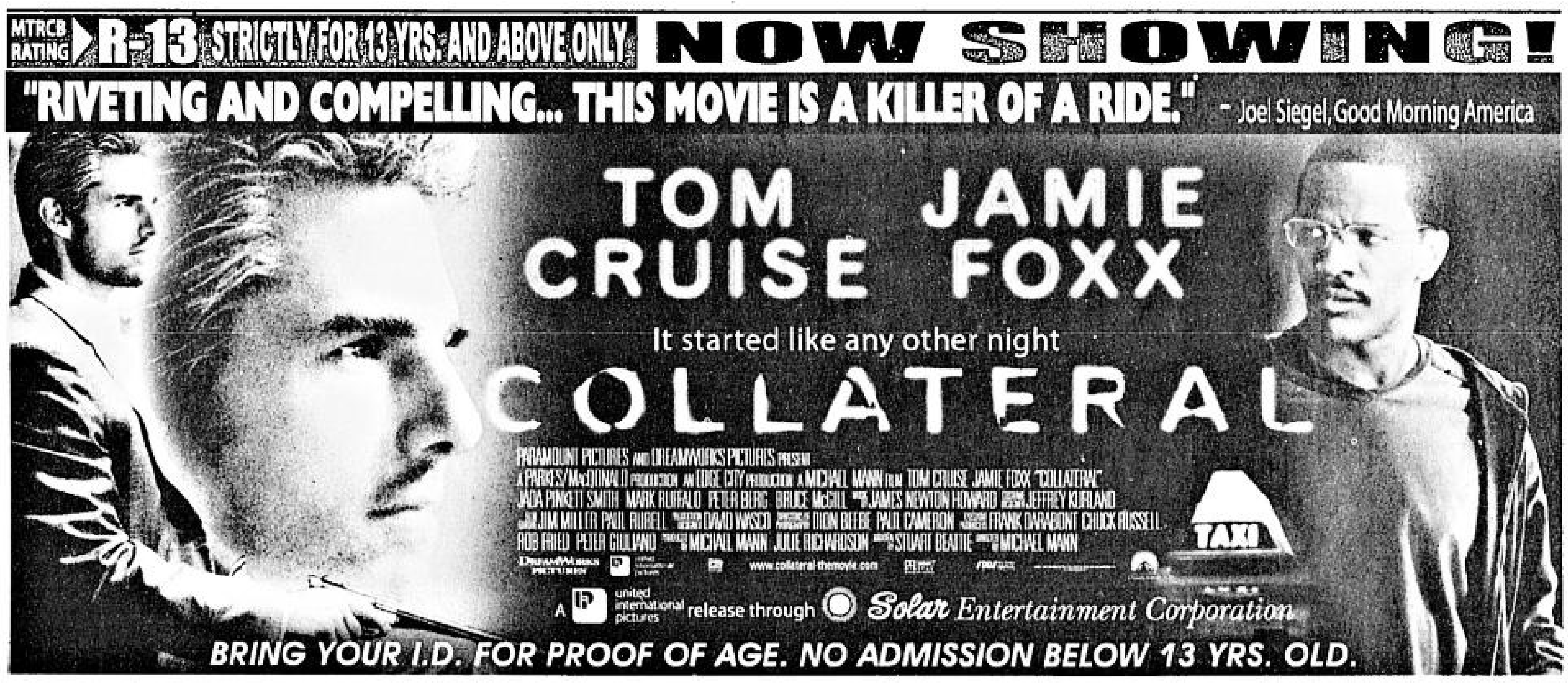
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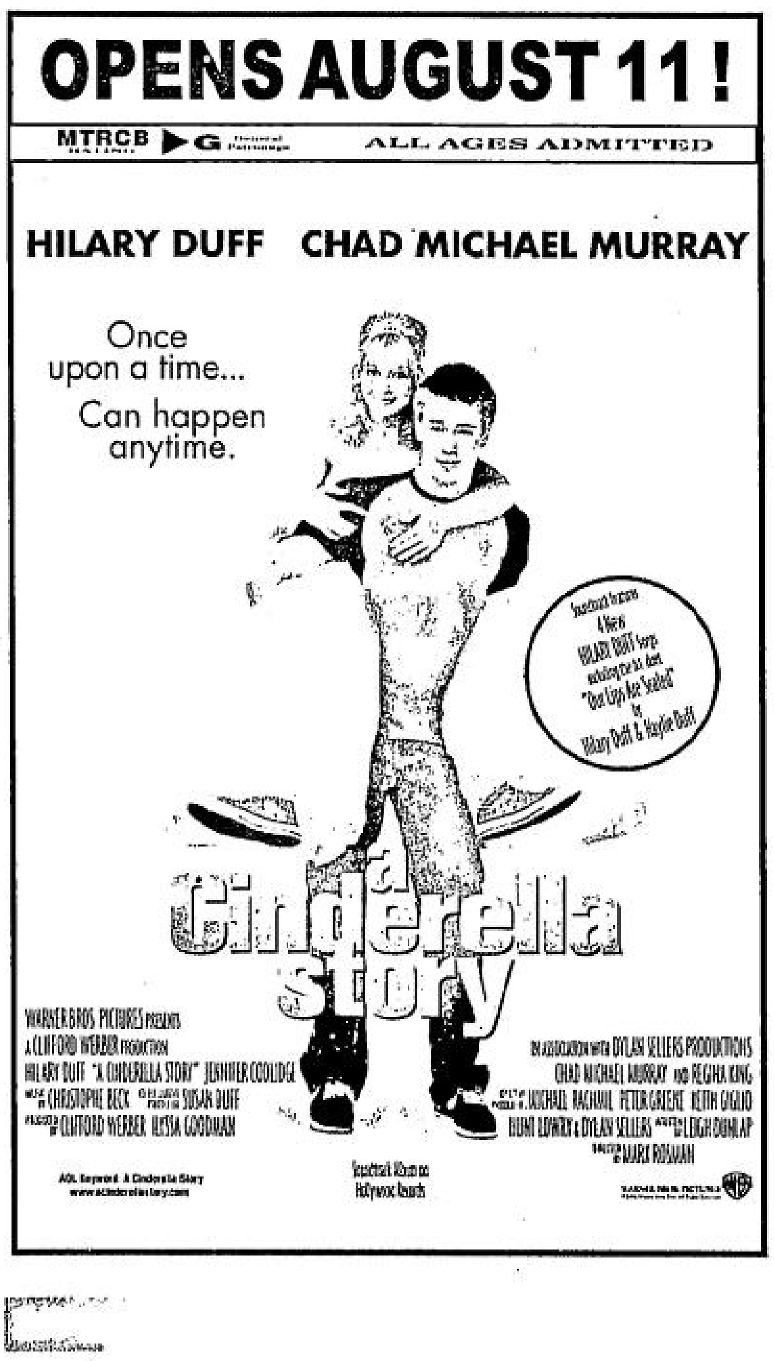
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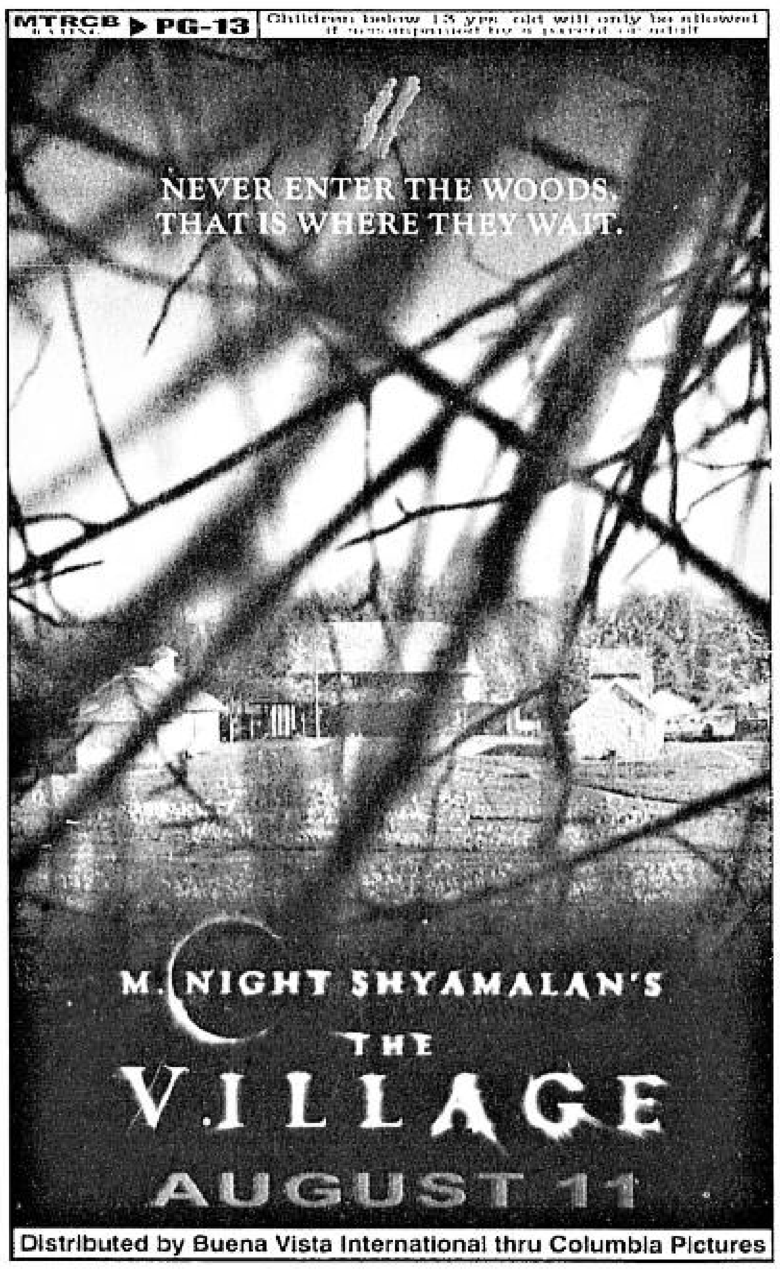
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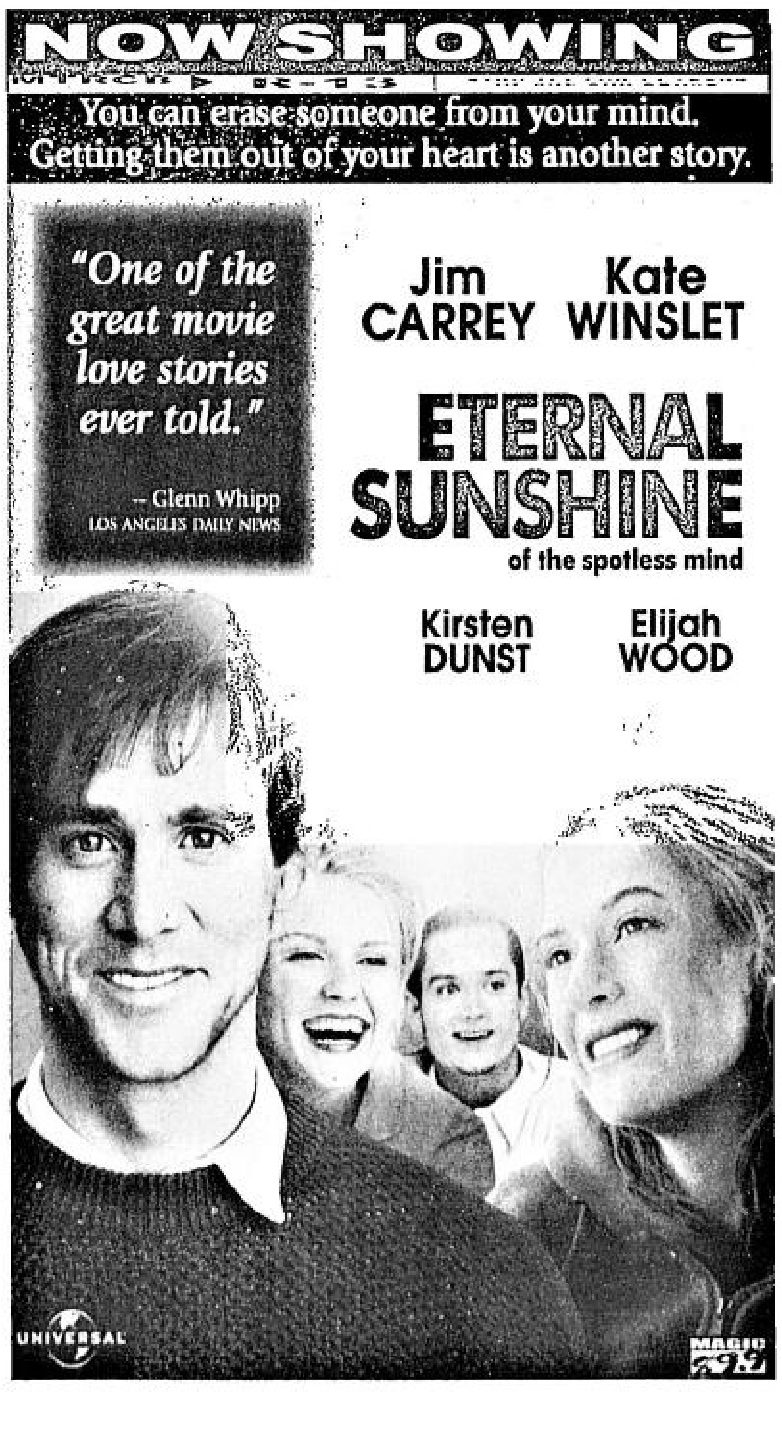
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JUVENILE STAKES

Speed Majesty, Lamborghini frolic in mud

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

SPEED Majesty made the loudest noise in the Juvenile Colts, while Lamborghini reigned supreme in the Juvenile Fillies at the start of the championship series for 2-year-old gallopers yesterday at the Santa Ana Park.

Proving his previous win was for real, Speed Majesty used his blinding speed from the gates to repeat over the heavily favored Real Spicy, a son of 1998 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes champion Real Quiet.

"*Talagang inuna ko na kasi yun talaga ang paraan para talunin si Real Spicy* (I really sent him to the lead right away because that's the only way we could beat Real Spicy)," said star jockey Jeffril Zarate, who was also aboard Speed Majesty the first time they humbled Real Spicy in the Santa Ana Juvenile on July 11 via the same wire-to-wire style.

Speed Majesty, sired by Royal Premiere out of Hidden Lover, finished the 1,450-meter race four lengths away from the Hermie Esguerra-owned, Pat Dilema-handled Real Spicy, who huffed and puffed chasing the Yutadco Stable bet throughout the muddy route.

But the Esguerra Stable bounced backed with might as Dilema superbly powered Lamborghini to a five-length victory in the fillies' contest over coupled bet One Vision.

"*Nakabawi* (We're able to make up)," gushed Dilema, the three-time PSA Jockey of the Year and July's winningest rider with 19 wins.

Speed Majesty, conditioned by Mario de la Paz, and the Joselito "Nick" Atienza-trained Lamborghini, a chestnut daughter of Mr. Sutter out of Always Royal, both won P600,000 courtesy of main sponsor Philippine Racing Commission.

Golden Fantasy wound up third and last in the Juvenile Colts race, which was reduced to three entries with Gutsy Warrior scratched due to a leg injury.

Undisputed, who challenged Lamborghini at the top of the stretch, arrived third in the Juvenile Fillies, followed by Jedi, Queen Josephine, Rule and Reign, Pyramid Relaunch and Beyond Reach.

Speed Majesty covered the race in 1:30 flat (14.5-23.5-24-28), while Lamborghini negotiated the same distance in 1:31 (15-23.5-24.5-28).

Eagles tame . . .

From page A25

The scores:

Second Game (Srs)

UP 69—Almeda 18, Santos 13, Cervantes 9, David 7, Ibañes 6, Cruz 5, Quebral 3, Epres 3, Ferrrer 3, Bienvenida 2, Gomez 0, Buyco 0, Agbayani 0, Penzon 0.

NU 56—Fernandez 16, Estolano 8, Mollena 7, Asoro 6, Miclat 5, D. Catamora 5, King 5, Balijon 4, Malcontento 0, Mendoza 0, Malagueño 0, C. Catamora 0.

Quarters: 21-15, 36-25, 59-40, 69-56.

Third Game (Srs)

ATENEO 67—Tenorio 26, Membrere 7, Bugia 6, Intal 6, Tiu 5, Arao 5, Quimson 4, Del Rosario 3, Escalona 3, Kramer 2, Aguilar 0.

FEU 64—Santos 18, Miranda 16, Yabut 10, Rizada 6, Isip 6, Chan 4, Villanueva 2, Dela Cruz 2, Mangahas 0, Garcia 0, Cutler 0, Barcellano 0.

Quarters: 15-18, 43-29, 55-54, 67-64.

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3 IMELDA 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
4 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
5 GARFIELD 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
6 ALONG CAME POLLY 10:30, 12:40, 2:50, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40
7 DEAD PEOPLE 10:20, 12.40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8 ELLA ENCHANTED 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
9 CATWOMAN 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
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2 CATWOMAN 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5.10, 7:30, 9:50
3 GARFIELD 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:40, 10:05
4 MAKAMUNDO 11:15, 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
5 DEAD PEOPLE 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
6 COLLATERAL 10:50, 1:30, 4.10, 6:50, 9:30
7 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:40

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280
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2 COLLATERAL 11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:35
3 GARFIELD 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6.50, 8.50, 10.35
4 CATWOMAN 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8.20, 10:35
5 DEAD PEOPLE 10.50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6.50, 9.00
6 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10
7 COLLATERAL 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25
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1 GARFIELD 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30
2 CATWOMAN 10:15, 12:45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:30
3 I, ROBOT 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
4 ALONG CAME POLLY 10:50, 12.50, 2:45, 4:40, 6:35, 8:30
5 COLLATERAL 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
6 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35
7 MAKAMUNDO 11:00, 1:25, 3.50, 6:15, 8:40
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2 ELLA ENCHANTED
3 COLLATERAL
4 KING ARTHUR
5 EVE
6 LIBERATED 2

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6 Dolby ETERNAL SUNSHINE 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
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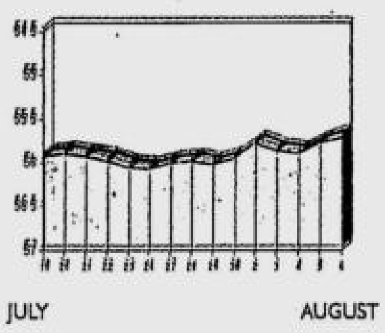

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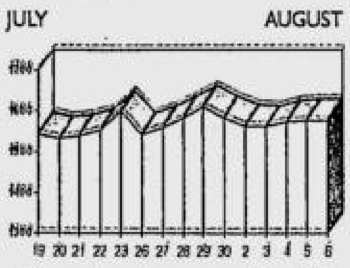
STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen to remain weak



(See stock market report on Page B6)

STOCKS are expected to remain weak this week after reeling from a string of negative news last week, among them the surge in oil prices and news of Meralco's added woes from a recent court ruling.

BPI Trade said in its weekly report that investors were likely to be more cautious.

"The market needs positive news to lure back investors to the market. Market direction will be dictated by the movement of oil prices. The market may consolidate within the 1550 to 1600 range," BPI Trade wrote.

Last week, the main composite index dropped by 7.85 points or 0.50 percent week-on-week to 1,576.85.

Investors dumped shares of the Lopez group after the Court of Appeals ruled last week to reverse the decision by the Energy Regulatory Commission to grant Meralco's rate unbundling request.

STOCKS/ B6

By Abigail L. Ho

THE RECENT Court of Appeals ruling on Manila Electric Co.'s unbundled rates has placed the country's investment environment on shaky ground and has given the impression that regulatory decisions in the power sector can always be overturned by the courts.

The Energy Council of the Philippines, an association of local and foreign energy companies, expressed "grave concern" over the possible repercussions of the decision, particularly now when the country was in need of power sector investments to avert a projected power crisis in 2008.

Regulatory stability, the organization said in a statement issued on Friday, was a prime consideration for investors thinking of sinking in hard-earned cash into a sector as capital-intensive as the power industry.

"The Court of Appeals decision is a step backward," the ECP said.

The ECP pointed out that the Energy Regulatory Commission was formed precisely to decide on cases and rate applications that were technically and financially specific to the power sector.

As these decisions required complicated technical and financial expertise, the group said the ERC was the best body to handle such cases and to issue such decisions.

Also, the fact that the appellate court released its decision to annul and set aside the ERC's approval of Meralco's unbundled rates more than a year after the ERC issued its order gave the impression that the local power sector showed no predictability for investors.

"That delay inevitably contributes to the growing consensus that decisions of the ERC do not stand on solid ground for they are at times reversed by the courts," the ECP said. "Thus, they cannot serve as the basis for future investments and vital loans from international lenders."

The court's order to have the Commission on Audit scrutinize Meralco's books could also affect all previous decisions of the ERC unbundling the rates of other distribution utilities and electric cooperatives, the ECP said.

This decision could also cause delays in the approval of future rates unbundling and rate-setting applications of power distributors, the group added.

The ECP recommended that if the COA should play a role in some of the ERC's decisions, it should only be in aiding the regulatory body come up with a specific analytical framework on which the approval of rates unbundling requests would be based.

"The ECP feels it is unfortunate that this court decision is made now when power shortages have already hit the Visayas, and more are forecast for Luzon in 2007 and 2008," the group said. "To avert these shortages, it is critical that the distribution utilities are technically and financially healthy and that the economic basis for their continued operations is predictable."

Tighter rules on credit card operations eyed

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is set to issue new guidelines to tighten up banks' evaluation of credit card clients following the surge in past-due receivables from this unsecured lending.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said that while the institution has recently issued stiff guidelines on the credit operations of banks, there was a need to further boost the regulatory framework to fill in some gaps.

"The banks' credit evaluation appears problematic," Reyes said.

The BSP official noted that rules may have to be drawn up to ensure that banks would conduct a tighter assessment of credit card users' capability to pay.

However, he said there was no need to go to the extent of prescribing a ceiling on credit card exposure as a percentage of banks' portfolio.

"Compared to the total portfolio, banks have a small exposure on credit cards," Reyes said.

The BSP did not want to impose a ceiling on a business segment which had a lot of room for growth, he added.

Based on industry data, credit card penetration rate in the Philippines is estimated at only 30 percent of the population, which means that the remaining 70 percent still had no access to these products.

There are only about four million credit cards issued in the Philippines. Given that the average credit card issuer has at least two different cards, the actual number of onshore credit cards issued is estimated at only two million.

Nevertheless, credit cards represent lending without collateral and whose past-due ratios have been rising. With the cutthroat competition among institutions issuing credit credits, there is a tendency to be more aggressive in expanding the customer base.

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Borrowings down 5.3% in June

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S net borrowings dipped by 5.3 percent in the first half to P79.103 billion, from P83.545 billion in the same period last year.

Net borrowings is computed as the difference between the amount borrowed by the national government and the payments it made to cover maturing obligations.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the bulk of the government's net borrowings, amounting to P58.276 billion, came from domestic sources, while P20.827 billion came from foreign sources.

Gross external borrowings sourced from foreign lenders stood at P83.284 billion.

This included project and program loans from international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, and revenue generated from the issuance of zero coupon bonds and global bonds.

Money generated from bond issuances abroad was used to finance the national government's own budget requirements for the period and that of the debt-ridden state-owned power firm National Power Corp.

The government paid a total of P62.457 billion in maturing external obligations in the first half, resulting in net foreign borrowings of P20.827 billion.

Gross internal borrowings, or those sourced from the issuance of local government securities, reached P144.783 billion. The amount included money raised from the auction of treasury bills, treasury bonds, and those from fixed-term deposits.

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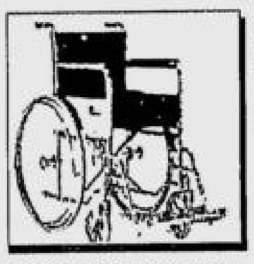

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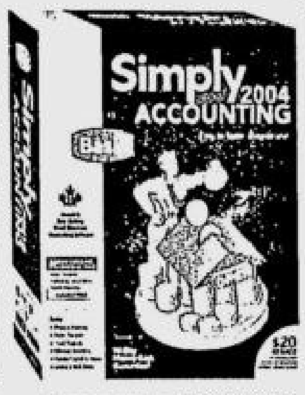

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The Federal option

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

MINDANAO is the country's cash cow, which only gets dog food.

This battle cry has been dismissed by some as mere emotional rhetoric of people from Mindanao who seek the attention of national leadership.

However, for Mindanaoans who have long suffered the disadvantages of a highly centralized government, this battle cry is rational, logical and justifiable.

And this is a reason why some of those who belong to the disadvantaged sectors in the already disadvantaged island have gone to the extent of calling for the secession of Mindanao from the Philippines.

It may not be the only reason behind Mindanao's woes, and of the other "provinces" for that matter, but certainly the present unitary government structure is one of the main reasons why Metro Manila is favored over the regions in matters of development.

The unitary system is characterized by over-concentration of power and wealth in the national capital and the neglect of the rest of the regions.

Resources of Mindanao and the other provinces go to Manila, but disproportionately little goes back to them.

Since the restoration of our democracy, there have been some efforts from the national leadership to correct the country's inequitable growth and development due to over-concentration of power in Manila.

Among these efforts is the enactment of the Local Government Code of 1991, which took effect in 1992.

Authored by Mindanaoan legislator Nene Pimentel, the Code set the policy that the territorial and political subdivisions of the state shall enjoy genuine and meaningful local autonomy.

This is to enable them to attain their fullest development as self-reliant communities and make them more effective partners in the attainment of national goals.

Toward this end, the government shall provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure instituted through a system of decentralization, whereby local government units shall be given more powers, authority, responsibilities and resources.

After some 10 years of implementation, the Code has, to a certain extent, empowered the local government units.

However, the present conditions of the regions outside of Manila show that the landmark legislation, though laudable, has not adequately addressed the problem of inequitable development.

It is an indication that the "reform" made by the Code on the present unitary system is not enough.

To make a substantial improvement in the lives of the Mindanaoans, there is a need to effect significant structural change.

Senator Pimentel himself, who authored the Local Government Code, is one of the strong advocates of a structural change—from the present unitary system to a federal system of government.

He said that the two main reasons for the proposal to federalize the Philippines are to speed up the economic development of the entire nation and, to lay down the basis for a just and lasting peace in Mindanao.

The adoption of a federal system of government would address the concerns that development efforts are being thwarted by the bias shown by Manila-based bureaucrats in favor of the national capital.

In their own federal states, the state government would be more empowered to plan, fund and implement projects, which can dovetail with their peculiar needs.

A federal system will respond to the long-felt demands of local government units and businesspersons for their release from costly, time-consuming, stifling, and demoralizing effects of excessive centralization and controls by the national government in the unitary system.

Under the federal system, the power of the federal republic may cover foreign affairs, national defense, federal taxes, customs and migration, basic education and basic justice.

The primacy in matters of development and police, among others, may be assigned to the component states of the federation.

The Constitution may also provide for the concurrent jurisdiction of the federal republic and its component states on certain powers.

Moreover, the adoption of a federal system of government would give the Bangsa Moro a fuller opportunity to promote their own identity, culture and economic development at their own pace, without the need to secede or declare their independence from the republic.

The adoption of the federal system of government needs revision of the Constitution.

With the country's budget deficit, many sectors are wary of attempts to amend or revise the fundamental law of the land.

As the process would entail substantial cost, this may force the government to further cut its budget for its departments, which may consequently deprive the people of basic services.

For decades however, Mindanao and the country have been trapped in a cycle of underdevelopment.

If a change in the structure is a probable way to end this cycle, then the cost of amending or revising the Constitution may be a long-delayed investment that the country has to make.

Note: I would like to thank Rey Teves of Kusog Mindanao and Lihuk Federal for sharing his thoughts on this subject matter.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; she is vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; member of the Export Development Council and former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

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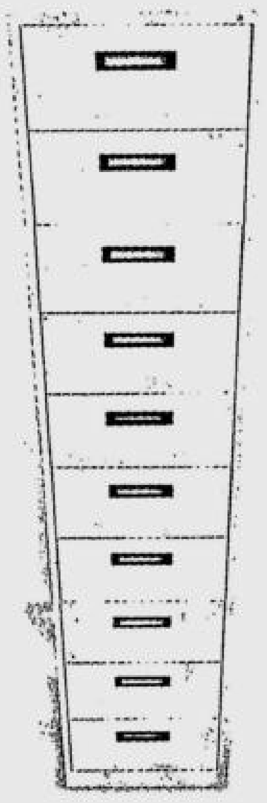

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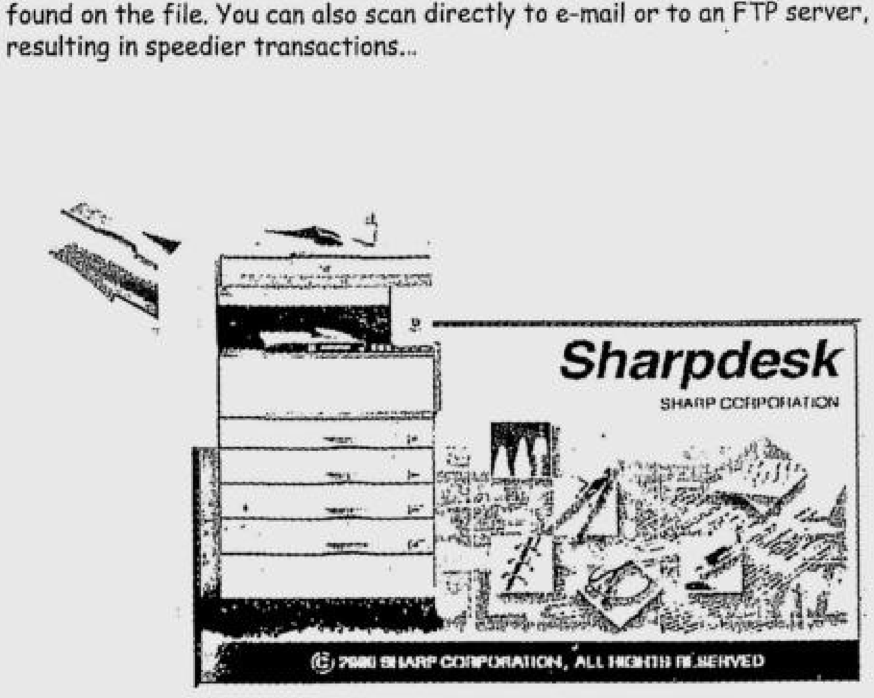

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Group backs Peza move vs Cebu firm

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE FEDERATION of Philippine Industries has backed the Philippine Economic Zone Authority's canceling of the registration of a Cebu-based garment firm, which it said was possibly one of the sources of used clothing sold in *ukay-ukay* outlets nationwide.

FPI president Jesus Arranza said RA 4653 prohibits the importation of used clothing for commercial purposes.

Under the law, used clothes and rags may enter the country only if: these would be used solely for public entertainment or exhibits; these were brought in to be used in making movies; donated as relief goods but cleared by the Department of Social Work and Development.

The FPI had earlier said that smuggled used clothing finding their way to *ukay-ukay* shops all over the country has resulted to the continuing decline in the viability of the local garments industry.

Last week, the Department of Trade and Industry said Peza had revoked the registration of Pearl City Garments Inc. as an ecozone export enterprise in the Mactan Export Processing Zone 1.

It said that Pearl City had unaccounted im-

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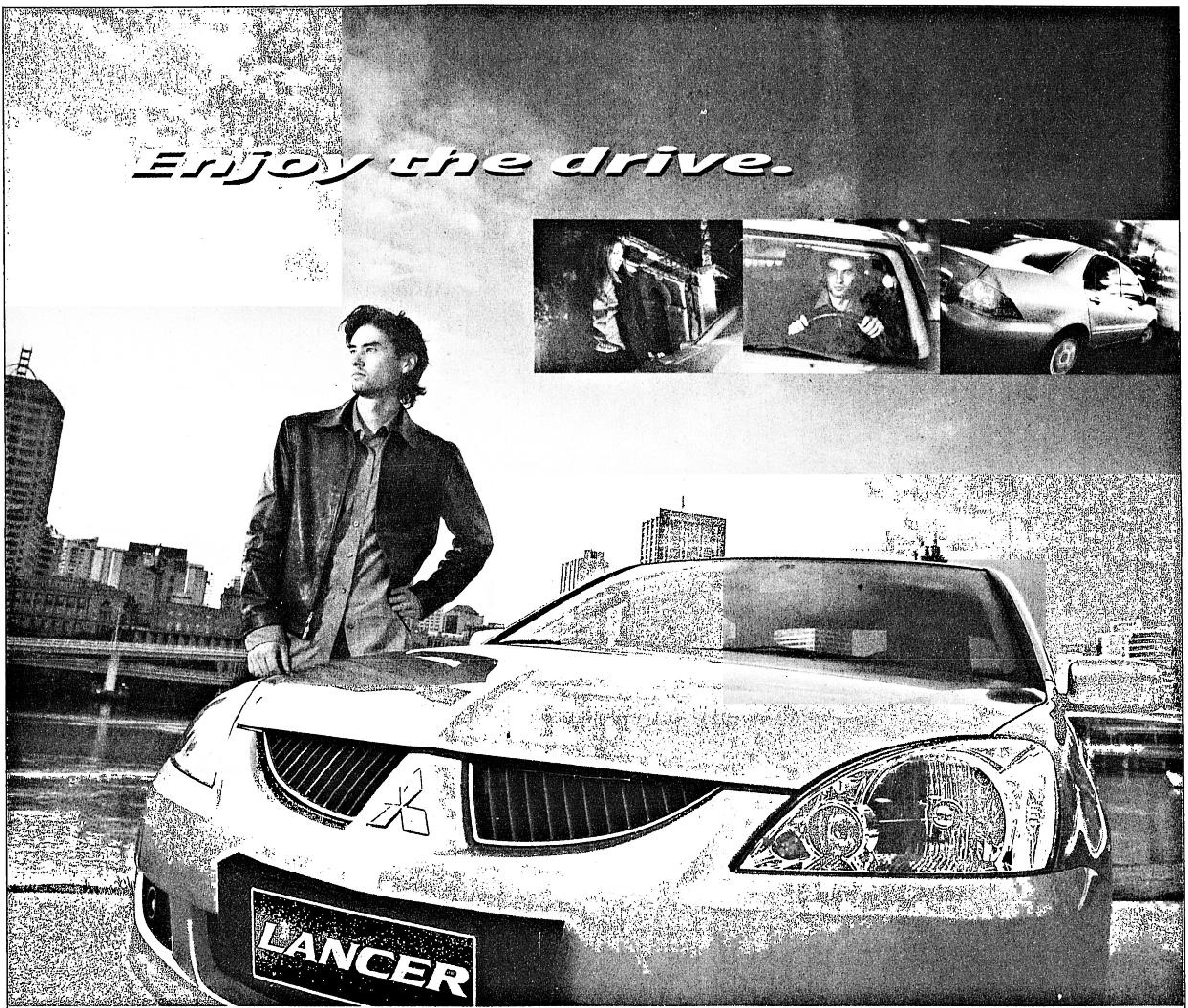

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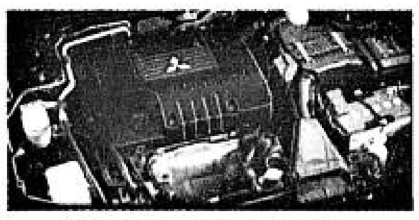
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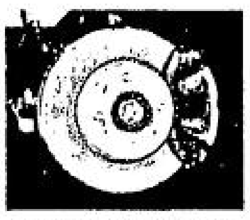
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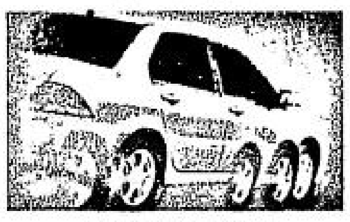
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Thrift banks' NPLs up

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NON-PERFORMING loans of thrift banks rose to 12.35 percent of the sector's total portfolio as of end-April from 12.18 percent the previous month, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

Despite the monthly increase, the ratio was still better by 0.45 percentage point than the 12.8 percent NPL ratio during the same period last year.

The BSP attributed the uptick in the NPL ratio in April to the P510 million in combined increment in the NPLs reported by 35 thrift banks that more than offset the P410 million in combined reduction in the NPLs of 39 other banks. The remaining 13 banks in the thrift bank sector reported no change in their NPLs.

The thrift bank sector's NPL ratio exclusive of interbank loans likewise went up by 0.09 percentage point to 12.73 percent in April from 12.64 percent in March.

More on RP and Thailand

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

OUR article last week on the Philippines and Thailand as estranged twins elicited more reader feedback than usual, and understandably so. The way Thailand had pulled away so dramatically from us in recent decades, after having had virtually identical economic standings in the 1960s, provides very graphic indication of how things could have been for us Filipinos if only we had done the right things—or at least done things the way the Thais did. But easy as it is to see how widely our experience and performance has diverged from that of Thailand, it is not as easy to explain why.

Too many Filipinos?

To some, the answer lies in population. Rosemarie Edillon shared with us findings of a just-completed study by Arsenio Balisacan and Charisse Tubianosa for the Asia-Pacific Policy Center (APPC) that zeroed in on the very different population growth rates between the two countries since the 1970s.

Last week we pointed out how the two countries had identical populations in the 1960s, and how even our population growth rates between 1965 to 1973 were equal, at a brisk 3.1 percent a year. But Thailand slowed down dramatically from then on, and now we outnumber the Thais by 18 million. That's equivalent to the entire population of Mindanao!

The APPC study found that if we had followed the same population growth path as Thailand, Filipinos' average income a year would have been higher by 900 US dollars today. It also estimated that 3.6 million more Filipinos would have graduated from poverty. Let our legislators fight over whether there should be a two-child policy, whether Filipino mothers should avoid pregnancy for five years, or whatever—but by now, the debate should no longer be on whether we should slow down the rapid growth of our population or not, but simply on how we should do it.

Inferior infrastructure

Reader Mariano Javier laments: "Thailand now has a subway while we still have to contend with the antiquated jeepneys. And while they have managed to build a subway in spite of the fact that Bangkok is crisscrossed with canals, we have no idea at all as to how Malabon and Navotas can be spared from annual floods."

He further writes: "In 1954, Manila hosted the 2nd Asian Games. Bangkok has since hosted the Asian Games four times (1966, 1970, 1978 and 1998). We have not since considered hosting another Asian Games because our facilities are so antiquated and we would not pass the standards required. And as we struggle to host the Southeast Asian Games in 2005 (a regional competition way, way below in standards and prestige from the continental Asian Games), there is talk of Bangkok making a bid for the 2016 Olympics (Beijing will be host in 2008, as Moscow, Madrid, Paris, London and New York are still slugging it out for 2012). As Thailand heads skyward, the Philippines continues to sink deeper into the pits."

Worst of both worlds

Reader Ruben Gomez had compiled comparative data on Philippine and Thai economic indicators since 1960, particularly inflation and GDP growth rates. He observes: "What is particularly striking in comparing the Philippines and Thailand was that in the '50s, the Philippines was doing significantly better than Thailand in terms of GDP growth (6.5 percent vs. 4.7 percent) and inflation rate (0.1 percent for the Philippines against Thailand's 2.6 percent). But Thailand started doing better than the Philippines beginning as far back as the decade of the 1960s."

He further writes: "What has not been given any emphasis at all in most analyses comparing the two countries is the much higher rate of inflation in the Philippines since the 1960s (5.3 vs. 2 percent in the '60s, and 14.0 vs. 9.8 percent in the '70s). These raise the fundamental question—what is so different in the structure of the Philippine economy or society such that it has the worst of both worlds: higher inflation and lower growth compared to many Asian countries?" What, indeed, is wrong with us?

Explaining the gap

Reader Chifai Yeung sees leadership as key: "A leader must lead and pay attention from head to toe. It's like paying attention to our path when we walk to make sure our feet do not stumble in the rocky road, but at the same time looking far ahead to reach our destination." Yeung adds that President Fidel V. Ramos has been the only President to manifest this quality in recent decades.

To Arnel Paguio, an OFW working in Abu Dhabi, patriotism is what we lack compared to the Thais. He reports: "My Thai colleagues here in UAE only buy Thai products even if it is more expensive than the equivalent product. And every one of them invites tourists to visit their country." But in the Philippines, he observes, "even the young militants and rallyists and their leaders wear imported clothes and shoes which can be seen during their street protests."

Reacting to my observation that we had been mentors to the Thais in the 1960s, Clifford Paragua laments: "They put their learnings into practice and very likely even improved on them. For us, we probably were just content to bask in our glory as teachers. We just taught. We did not do."

Alster Labajo believes policies make the difference. "Corruption is also a way of life in Thailand," he observes, "and I am led to think that economic development has really nothing to do with the type of government system that you adopt, but rather how the government administrators initiated liberal economic policies that would benefit the majority of their countrymen." Alster's optimism is admirable. He further writes: "As always, hope is not lost yet… The Philippines, with all its resources and talented people, can make it at the end."

I wrote him back to point out he missed one important thing: that it is only by the grace of God that we will extricate ourselves out of this mess. But we need the masses of the Filipino people from top to bottom to truly acknowledge this so God can do His work for this country.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

2 bills reimposing franchise tax on telecom firms filed

By Michelle V. Remo

TWO separate bills reimposing a franchise tax on telecommunication companies have been filed in Congress, pursuing the Arroyo administration's resolve to generate more revenue from the lucrative telecommunication industry.

The bills were filed by Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez and Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson. The congressmen noted that the government has not been collecting enough taxes from telecommunication firms because of loopholes in the value-added tax system currently imposed on them.

The Department of Finance said some telecom firms claimed too much input VAT credits, therefore substantially reducing their VAT liabilities. The DOF said that Globe Telecom, for instance, did not pay VAT in 2003 because the input VAT it declared for the period was higher than its output VAT.

Under the VAT system, taxpayers are allowed to deduct their input VAT credits from the amount of VAT they have to pay the government. Input VAT credits are the amount of VAT included in the cost of services or goods that anyone purchases.

Because telecom firms declared huge amounts of input VAT credits and therefore remitted a "low" amount of VAT, the government thought of taxing the telecom sector more. The government initially proposed taxing text messages, but its unpopularity among consumers forced the government to abandon the proposal and instead think of restoring a franchise tax on telecom firms.

A franchise tax is a tax on a right or privilege acquired by special grant from the public or the legislature. The tax is imposed on firms that run a public franchise, such as telecommunication, water, and electricity services.

Under Singson's bill, telecommunication companies would be levied a 5-percent franchise tax. Radio and television broadcasting companies, whose gross receipt of the preceding year did not exceed P10 million, would be subject to 3-percent franchise tax. Lastly, electric, gas and water utilities shall be imposed a 2-percent franchise tax.

Under Suarez's bill, telecommunication firms would be slapped a 3.5-percent franchise tax in the first year of implementation, and 7 percent in the succeeding years. Broadcasting firms earning less than P10 million would be subject to 3-percent franchise tax. Electric, gas and water utilities would be required to pay a franchise tax of 2 percent.

Under both bills, broadcasting firms are allowed to make the option of paying VAT instead of franchise tax if they wish so.

The franchise tax rate stated under both bills differ from the 3 percent initially proposed by the DOF.

Telecom companies, however, said they wanted to be retained under the VAT system. In a recent consultation meeting on the franchise tax held at the DOF, telecom companies said they were now expected to remit higher VAT payments after most of them have already completed importing their capital equipment requirements.

They explained that the reason they had high input VAT credits was because of their purchases of expensive capital equipment. The VAT they shouldered in buying these equipment were deducted from their total VAT liabilities.

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Money-spinners

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

FOR spinning oodles and oodles of money out of idle chatter, Globe and Smart are now flavors of the month by the no-new-tax-but-spend-some-more politicians.

Globe's consolidated return on average equity (ROE) for the second quarter of the year was an impressive 26 percent. Translated to cash, the Globe wireless business generated P3.64 billion in profit before income tax in the same quarter, and P7.37 billion for the first half of the year.

Smart, on the other hand, racked up double that of Globe, at P15.27 billion, out of the PLDT wireless group net operating income of P15.39 billion for the first six months of 2004.

But if you think that these returns are mouthwatering, you have not seen the ROEs of some of the foreign banks in the country.

Deutsche Bank, for instance, turned in a whopping 51.66 percent ROE for the first quarter of the year. For the second quarter ending June, the profit velocity slowed down to still a globally competitive 25.89 percent.

Bank of America reported an even outstanding 71.45 percent ROE for January-March 2004. Its previous quarters ROEs, strangely, have hovered from several negative to an eye-popping 82.87 percent in the first quarter of 2001, coinciding with Edsa II and a classic blood-in-the-streets scenario.

HSBC, one of the oldest foreign banks in the country, has likewise been a steady money machine for its Hong Kong and London principals. For the last quarter, HSBC reported a 21.72-percent ROE, a little lower than the 25.81 percent of the previous quarter.

Like the American competition, the British-Sino bank gave the best recent quarter performance during the tumultuous first three months of 2001, with an ROE of 47.06 percent, largely due to its aggressive treasury operations.

Citibank, which counted the Estradas among their valued customers, was a little slower at 23.6-percent ROE during those restive months. And in the last quarter, Citibank crawled at 6.79 percent, after posting a 20.68-percent ROE in the first three months of 2004.

Strangely, the taipans, for all their political connections and reputed savvyness, have to a man been caught asleep during the Edsa II months as far as their bank and their treasury operations—perhaps they considered it distasteful and unpatriotic to take positions against the beleaguered peso—had been concerned.

Here's the ROE score sheet for the 1st quarter of 2001: Allied, 5.57; Banco de Oro, 9.28; Metrobank, 3.52; RCBC, 2.59; EastWest, 0.43; EPCIB, 2.22; and PNB, negative 46.

Even BPI, which had a direct line with the Edsa II forces, returned a mere 6.21 percent for every shareholder peso during that same quarter.

Three years after, the song remains the same. Except for Chinabank, iBank, BPI, Union Bank and Land Bank, all the local commercial banks posted single-digit ROEs for the second quarter of 2004. A number of them even posted losses. But that is another story.

Son of a gun

MELO'S steak house owner Carmelo Santiago is facing an estafa complaint from a money changer, and it is all because of his son-in-law Richard Rivera.

According to the criminal complaint filed last week by Raul Ilagan of Salcedo Village, Rivera handed Ilagan a P4-million check in exchange for dollars that Ilagan had transferred to Rivera's bank account sometime during the campaign.

Rivera, a Fernando Poe Jr. operative, paid with a Security Bank check and allegedly signed by Santiago, whose daughter Christine is married to him.

To make a long story short, the check bounced and when the money changer's lawyer wrote Santiago, Santiago's Accra lawyer Eric Recalde wrote back to deny that the steakhouse owner had ever issued the bad check.

GMA charm

IF YOU are being driven around in a BMW 760 limousine, chances are the cops would even salute you as your driver zips by even on the car's color-coded day.

But, then again, you never know. That is probably why PLDT/Smart president Napoleon Nazareno bought and screwed on an official-looking "GLORIA" commemorative plate on his front Bimmer bumper.

Like the "PRESS" and "DOCTOR ON CALL" signs that have been proliferating in many a private vehicle, the "GLORIA" plate works like a charm.

Just ask those who used to sport "ERAP" plates.

Heard through the grapevine

DESPITE supposedly serving only as a benchwarmer for then secret owner Mark Jimenez of the Erap-era Manila Times, construction magnate Reghis Romero appears unable to completely shake off the printer's ink that has gotten into his system.

Romero has lately been making overtures about re-starting a shuttered tabloid, apparently to use it as a defensive, perhaps even offensive, weapon for what until now has been a low-intensity competitive conflict on the multibillion-peso container business at the Manila North Harbor. *(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

PLDT targets 4-year net profit of ₱110B

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BOARD of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. has set a four-year profit target of P110 billion starting 2004, which should raise the company's share price to P1,700 by the end of 2007, according to PLDT's top official.

The PLDT board had set two hurdles for key executives, officers and full-time advisers of the parent firm, subsidiaries and affiliates who would be given a chance to participate in a P3.6-billion, four-year cash incentive program, according to Napoleon Nazareno, president of PLDT and Smart Communications Inc.

The incentive plan starting January 2004 to end-2007 should ensure that key officials would work together to enhance efficiency and increase the telecom giant's profitability so it could meet medium-term objectives as well as its loan covenant.

PLDT ended the first half with a record income of P12 billion, an amount that exceeded full-year 2003's P11.2-billion profit.

The four-year target, according to Nazareno, would call for a growth of about 15 percent each year.

At this rate, PLDT's net profit should increase to P25.3 billion in 2005, P29.1 billion in 2006 and P33.5 billion in 2007.

This year, the company has revised its income target to P22 billion from about P18 billion following the strong first-semester results.

"If the share price and profit objectives are met, the cost of the plan before taxes, for the four-year period, will be approximately P3.6 billion. This amount represents less than 3 percent of the company's cumulative consolidated net profit for the plan period," Nazareno said.

Initially, about 630 people are expected to participate in the program.

PLDT's share price closed at P1,280 last Friday. "The target increase in the base PLDT share price is approximately 15 percent a year compounded for the plan period," the company said. PLDT's share price by the end of 2003 was about P950.

"Payment of awards under the plan is contingent upon the achievement of the board-approved target increase in PLDT's common share price by the end of the plan period and PLDT group's cumulative consolidated net profit target for the plan period," a company statement said.

The incentive would be paid out in a lump sum by 2008. It would be based on an official's annual base compensation, taking into account seniority, responsibility, level, performance, tenure and job difficulty.

"Approximately 630 key executives and advisers of the PLDT group are expected to initially participate in the plan. However, persons who join any of the companies within the group within two years from the start of the plan period may be selected to become participants," said the company.

Korean buys out partner in local bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE TONG Yang group, one of the biggest chaebols or business conglomerates in South Korea, is set to take full control of Orion Savings Bank and list the bank on the Philippine Stock Exchange in two years.

In an interview, BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said the policy-making Monetary Board has approved the acquisition by Tong Yang Investment Bank of a 100-percent stake in the thrift bank.

Reyes said the full takeover would be done by buying out the 40-percent minority stake held by Filipino partners through Harrigold Assets Inc. for an undisclosed amount.

"Now it's 100-percent owned by Tong Yang," he said.

Orion Bank, which started operations in November 1997 or during the height of the Asian currency turmoil, has an authorized capital of P1.2 billion and a paid-up capital of P310 million. It focuses on retail banking, such as in marketing automobile and salary loans.

"It has plans to list in the PSE within the next two years when the equity market improves and to provide stock options to employees and officers," Reyes said.

Philippine banking laws have been liberalized in the last decade to allow 100-percent ownership by foreigners of local banks.

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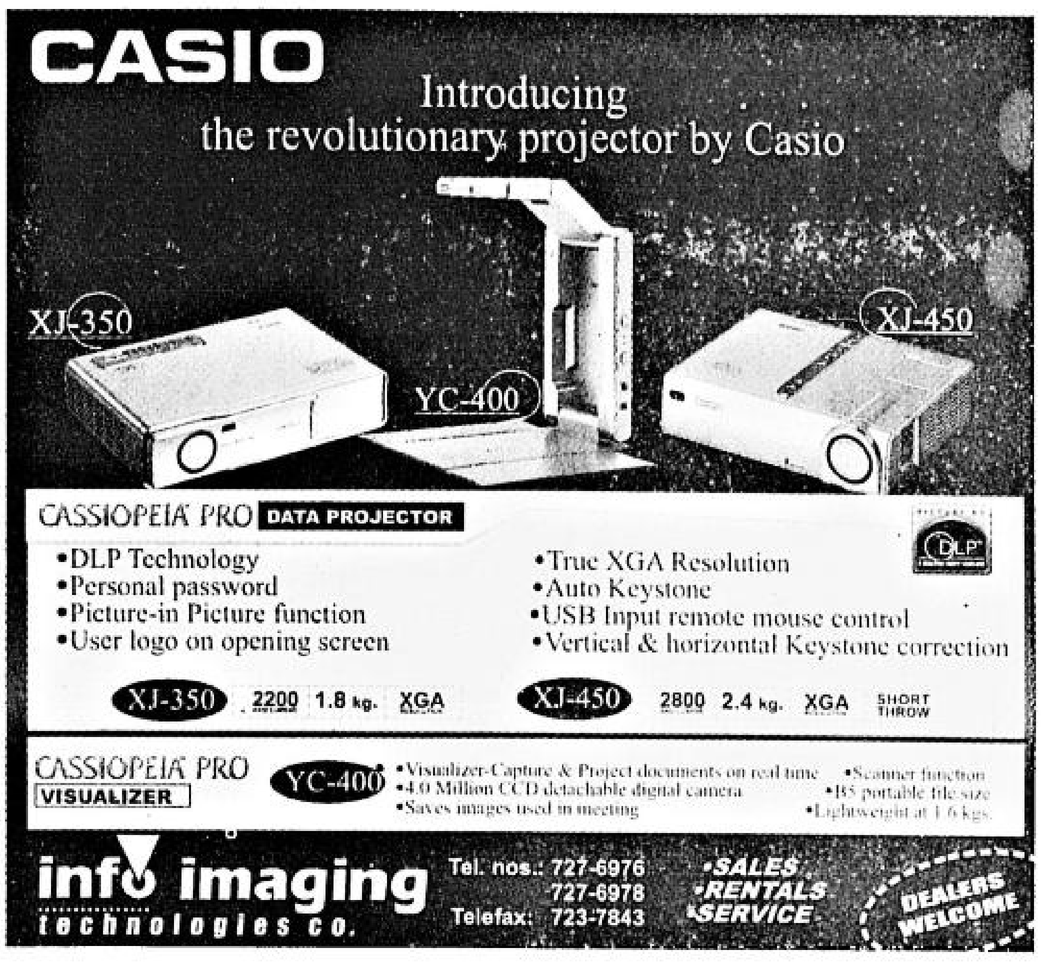
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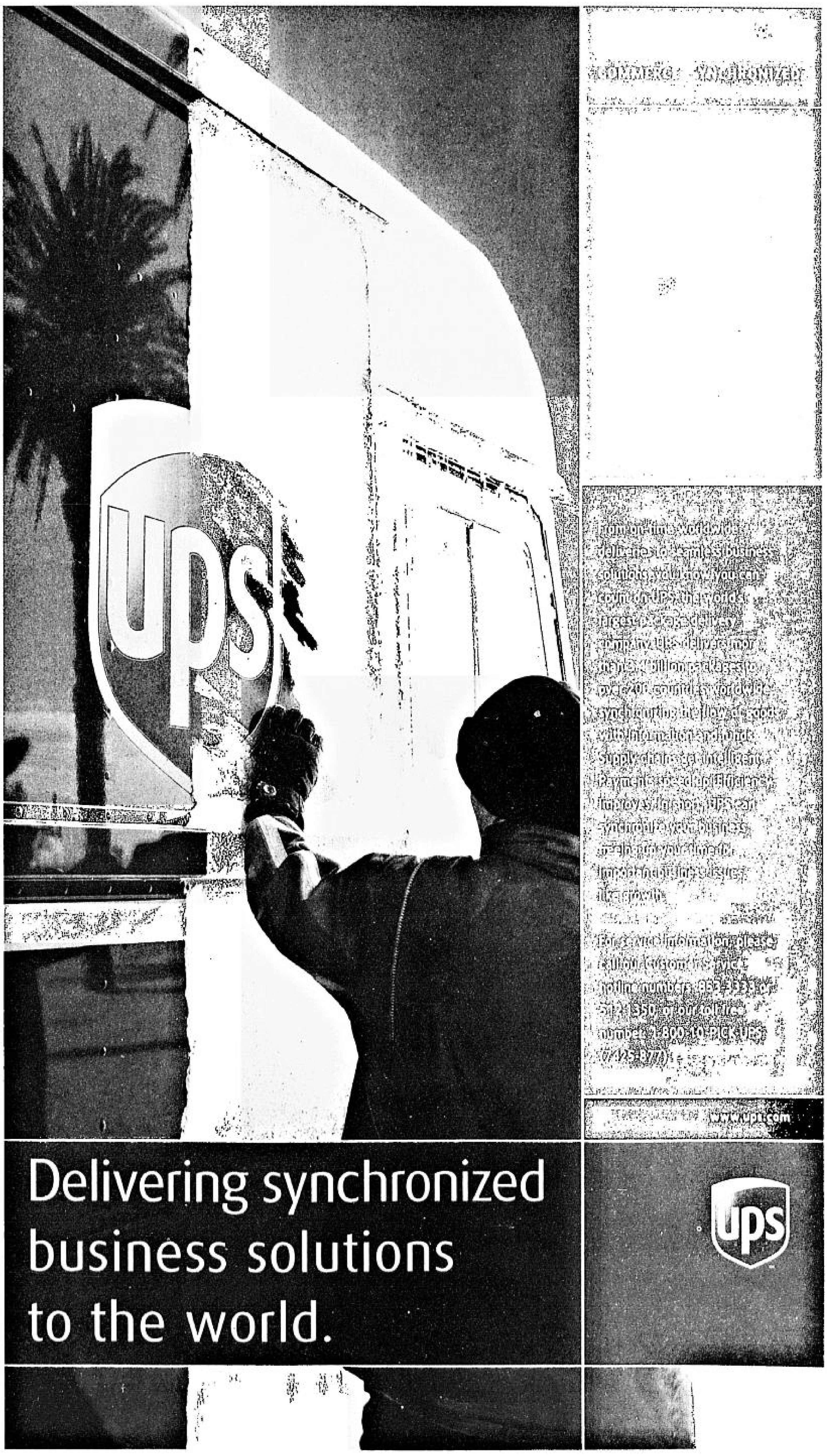

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GMA to hold IPO early next year

By Clarissa S. Batino

GMA Network Inc. said it had decided to hold its initial public offering in the first half of 2005, instead of September as earlier scheduled, saying that it would need more time to prepare for the IPO.

GMA president Felipe Gozon said the company would soon choose its underwriter from a list of four foreign and local groups that were earlier selected. The underwriter will help the company draw up the game plan for the sale of the 20-30 percent of the company's shares the domestic and overseas markets.

He said the company's three major shareholders had agreed that an IPO would be beneficial to the company.

"We are pushing through with the IPO but most likely not this year. We would do it in early 2005. There is still so much work to be done and we don't have enough time to meet the September window," said Gozon in an interview.

He said the fourth quarter was not an ideal time to list in the stock market.

Gozon said the plan was to sell between 20 and 30 percent of GMA to the public to raise about P9 billion.

He based his figures on GMA's enterprise value placed at P20 billion to P30 billion, or nearly double the P15 billion set when Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s Mediaquest Holdings Inc. had planned to acquire 66.67 percent of the company in 2001 for P8.5 billion.

He said it was about time the existing shareholders finally reap the fruits of their investments, which were made in mid 70s. The families of Gozon, Duavit and Jimenez control GMA. Duavit and Jimenez own 35 percent each while Gozon has 30 percent.

"I don't expect any problems among the shareholders. I think they will not object to the plan. Anyway, all we need is two-thirds and I think we have that already," said the GMA president.

The Jimenez group was reported to have plans to sell its stake to PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan.

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Calatagan Golf	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	240,000	180,000
Capitol Hills	140,000	130,000
Cebu Country Club	-	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports	170,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	240,000/300,000*	350,000**
Eastridge A/B*	-	70,000/90,000*
Forest Hills A/C*	160,000/250,000*	210,000*
Luisita Golf	400,000	280,000
Manila Golf Ind/Corp.*	-	10,300,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000	2,350,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	400,000	570,000*
Makati Sports Club	-	180,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	-	90,000/100,000*
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind.	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	-	150,000/280,000*/260,000**
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000/160,000*/180,000**	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	300,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	Pls. Call	60,000
Sherwood A/B*	60,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	530,000
Sta. Elena Golf	Pls. Call	-
The Palms Country Club	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Country Club	-	350,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	670,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	280,000	220,000
Valle Verde Ind.	-	120,000
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Manila Golf Club - Ind	-	10.3M
Manila Polo Club	2.4M	-
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Manila Southwoods "B"	-	650K
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Orchard Golf Club "A"	-	200K
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Baguio Country Club	580,000	650,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	80,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	250,000
Canlubang	-	500,000
Canyon Woods	-	200,000
Capitol Hills	125,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club	-	170,000
Club Filipino	-	135,000
Eagleridge "A"	200,000	250,000
Eagleridge "B"	250,000	300,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	170,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	230,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	280,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,500,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,100,000	10,500,000
Manila Polo	2,300,000	2,600,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	430,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	650,000	-
Manila Yacht Club	-	250,000
Metroclub "A"	150,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	180,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	150,000	210,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	330,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	350,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Spa & Lodge	550,000	650,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,500,000	-
Sta. Elena "B"	1,500,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	330,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	850,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	800,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	150,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	200,000
Valley Golf	250,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,300,000	-

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TRUST FUND BUILD-UP

CAP gets ₱3.4B in loan offer

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

COLLEGE Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) said a prospective foreign investor had offered to extend to the pre-need company at least P3.4 billion in loans.

The amount offered is equivalent to the face value of CAP's Metro Rail Transit or MRT bonds, sources said.

The loan proposal is an alternative to selling the bonds at its present value of P3.4 billion, which was lower than its 2002 appraised value of about P7 billion.

To cover for future educational pre-need claims, CAP was considering selling at least P3.4 billion worth of bonds backed by the cash flow from the MRT project this year.

A company source did not identify the prospective investor but said that the terms of a possible memorandum of agreement might be finalized by the end of this month.

The Securities and Exchange Commission earlier said CAP had sought another month to negotiate with a prospective investor that would likely infuse $100 million in new equity into the company.

The SEC said another investor was waiting to take over the company should CAP fail to find an investor.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said a European investment bank had approached the SEC to express its interest in infusing more than $100 million into the pre-need firm. She declined to identify the interested investor.

CAP is currently in talks with a North American fund and an Asian regional fund for possible equity infusion into the company. CAP needs fresh equity to address its trust fund deficit.

CAP said it had incurred a trust fund deficit due to higher tuition fees against the lower yields of its trust fund assets.

CAP's trust fund is managed by its trustee banks such as Bank of Commerce, Allied Bank, Philippine Veterans Bank, Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Bank of the Philippine Islands, Unionbank of the Philippines, and East West Banking Corp.

In its financial report last year, CAP said it had suffered recurring losses from operations amounting to P2.8 billion in 2003 and P403.3 million in 2002. Its trust fund assets, being managed by its trustee banks "had not grown sufficiently" to match its total ARL or net liability to plan holders amounting to P25.6 billion. This resulted in a paper trust fund deficit of P17.2 billion as of end-2003.

Ingasco completes plant expansion

INGASCO Inc., a subsidiary of Nippon Sanso Corp. of Japan, said it had completed the installation and commissioning of its expanded air separation plant, which formed part of the company's expansion program.

The program was undertaken in response to the government's call for companies to provide vital inputs to emergent and critical industries in the country.

The company started with the expansion of its nitrogen liquefier plant in San Jose Batangas which increased Ingasco's production capacity of liquid nitrogen, oxygen and argon. These gases are used by vital industries such as semi-conductor and electronics, petrochemical, oil refinery, pharmaceutical, steel and metal.

The expansion of the air separation plant doubled the company's production capacity to almost 300 tons per day.

Norikazu Ishikawa, president and chief executive officer of Ingasco Inc. and founding president of the Philippine Confederation of Industrial Gases Inc. will lead the formal inauguration of and switch-on ceremonies for the new air separation plant on Tuesday at the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel.

Ingasco's plants are located for easy access to major users in the various technoparks and economic zones in the greater Luzon and Manila area. The cryogenic air separation plant and its gas mixing facility are in San Jose, Batangas, while its hydrogen plant is in San Simon, Pampanga.

Nippon Sanso Corp., the parent company, is one of the world leading manufacturers of industrial gases and related equipment.

VAT on Drilon's steak dinner

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

PRESIDENT Corazon Aquino, in one of her best decisions, introduced the 5 percent value added tax (VAT) in 1987 to replace and simplify the sales tax and the contractor's tax. Within a few months after he took office in 1992, President Fidel Ramos expanded VAT's scope and raised the rate to 10 percent, which remains to this day.

Now, we are told, President Macapagal Arroyo plans to scrap the VAT system to go back to the old sales tax regime. The reason given is that too many taxpayers are getting away with skirting the VAT.

Even Senator Drilon complained the other day that, in a BIR report he had read, a restaurant would pay only 30 percent of the VAT collected. In other words, if Sen. Drilon ordered a steak dinner for P1,000, the restaurant would remit to the BIR only P30 of the P100 VAT that he paid. May I assure Sen. Drilon that the restaurant would not necessarily be doing anything wrong.

Let me go to the basics, to VAT 101. You may ask, how come I know so much about the VAT system? Because, like all insurance brokers, I have been in the midst of the system, collecting and paying the tax since 1987.

Here we go. The buyer pays the tax, the seller collects it for the BIR. Sen. Drilon pays P100 VAT on his steak dinner, the restaurant collects it. This is called the output tax.

When it is time for the restaurant to remit the collection to the BIR, the restaurant is allowed to deduct the VAT on its purchases. If the raw steak was bought from a meat dealer for P700, the restaurant paid P70 VAT on it. This is called the input tax. The restaurant deducts this P70 input tax from the P100 VAT that Senator Drilon paid. Thus, the restaurant sends only P30 to the BIR. And it is all perfectly legal. This is how the VAT system works.

Another good thing about the VAT system is that the restaurant has to make sure the P70 tax he paid to the meat dealer is duly receipted. Otherwise, the restaurant will have trouble deducting it from the P100 collected from Sen. Drilon. In the end, the BIR receives the P100 VAT from two sources: P30 from the restaurant, P70 from the meat dealer. Notice that the P70 from the meat dealer was probably remitted to the BIR long before Sen. Drilon paid for his steak dinner.

The restaurant can cheat by inflating the cost of the raw steak. The raw steak might have cost P500 and it is passed on to Sen. Drilon for P700. The restaurant deducts P70, instead of P50. The restaurant pockets P20. But an eagle-eyed tax examiner can easily spot this, unless his eagle eyes are focused on something else.

Under the old sales tax system, the P70 tax, which the restaurant paid the meat dealer, is added on to Sen. Drilon's bill. On the total bill of P1,070, Sen. Drilon pays a sales tax of P107. The additional P7 is the sales tax on the sales tax of P70. This double taxation is avoided in the VAT system. Not only that, Sen. Drilon's steak dinner now costs P1,070 plus P107 sales tax, or a total of P1,177. In the end, the BIR receives the sales tax of P70 from the meat dealer, and P107 from the restaurant, or a total sales tax of P177. The old sales tax system clobbers Sen. Drilon with multiple taxation.

In the guise of discarding a supposedly discredited VAT system, the plan to shift to the old sales tax system is really a sneaky way of raising taxes.

The VAT system levels the playing field; everybody pays 10 percent. But the Ramos tax code lists 26 (count them, 26) categories of goods and services that are exempt from the tax. There is probably another long list in BIR's implementing rules. The Board of Investments has a raft of industries that are VAT-exempt. Material and services used in building low-cost housing are VAT-exempt.

More exemptions are coming. The other night, I watched Congressman Danilo Suarez of Bondoc Peninsula on a TV talk show. He said that the telecom industry will no longer be subject to the 10 percent VAT, but to a 7 percent franchise tax.

Instead of going back to the outdated sales tax system, it will be far simpler—and more effective in raising revenues—to cut down the exemptions. Then, the playing field will truly be level.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 6, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	39,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41	41	40.5	41	19,100
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	8,700
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	150,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26	25.5	26	54,300
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	20,500
Security Bank Corp.	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.75	146,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	900
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2200	2200	2200	2200	50
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1500	1500	1500	80
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20.25	20.25	20	20.25	11,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.66	0.67	0.66	0.67	900,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	895	895	875	885	253,120
Ipeople Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.44	1.46	310,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	2,200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.44	2.46	2.38	2.4	22,409,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1275	1285	1270	1280	235,780
Ivantage Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	210,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	9,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.75	145,300
Manila Electric Co. B	21.75	22	21.25	21.25	1,388,800
Petron Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.75	1,045,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2	2	2	2	15,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	6,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	300,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	300,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.4	0.37	0.38	770,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.72	1.74	420,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	14,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	25.5	26	25.5	26	540,900
RFM Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.76	0.76	280,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57	56.5	57	106,700
San Miguel Corp. B	68.5	68.5	68.5	68.5	1,500
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,800
Universal Robina Corp.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	246,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	21,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	4,106,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.27	0.32	210,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	48,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	4,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	400,000
APC Group Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	103,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.02	1.02	1	1	131,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	24.25	25	24.25	25	15,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.14	0.165	2,200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	9,440,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,800,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.18	1.02	1.16	10,612,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	4,000,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	10,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23	23	22.5	22.75	665,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	1,300,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
Ionics Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.12	122,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	236,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	1,014,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	1,310,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	3,400,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	22,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	50,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	1,410,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	8,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.4	30,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	500,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.53	0.55	2,210,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	190,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	29,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	8,029,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.49	0.45	0.49	80,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	650,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.96	5,080,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	480,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	160,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	10,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	6	5.9	6	33,541,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.004	0.0036	0.004	207,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3	3.2	3	3.2	100,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.2	68,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.24	0.2	0.235	32,040,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.245	0.29	0.245	0.29	12,280,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	422,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	260,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0044	0.0038	0.004	842,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.45	0.38	0.45	13,010,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.43	0.5	0.41	0.48	2,240,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.16	0.17	0.15	0.15	1,780,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0036	0.0038	0.0036	0.0038	76,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	23,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	440,000
Pacifica	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.2	170,000

CURRENCIES

August 6, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.828569	1.000000	55.8400
Japan	Yen	0.007417	0.008951	0.4998
United Kingdom	Pound	1.512056	1.824900	101.9024
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106237	0.128217	7.1596
Switzerland	Franc	0.650471	0.785053	43.8374
Canada	Dollar	0.628895	0.759013	42.3833
Singapore	Dollar	0.480748	0.580215	32.3992
Australia	Dollar	0.583294	0.703977	39.3101
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.197913	2.652661	148.1246
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220952	0.266667	14.8907
Brunei	Dollar	0.479357	0.578536	32.3055
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000090	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019999	0.024137	1.3478
UAE	Dirham	0.225590	0.272264	15.2032
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.206900	67.3933
India	Rupee	0.017881	0.021580	1.2050
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218050	0.263165	14.6951
Mexico	New Peso	0.072503	0.087504	4.8862
New Zealand	Dollar	0.534526	0.645120	36.0235
Korea	Won	0.000713	0.000860	0.0480
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024355	0.029394	1.6414

Stocks seen . . .

From page B1

BPI Trade also said that what weighed the market down were fears of rising oil prices above the $40 a barrel level, "which could crimp consumption and thus have a negative impact" on company earnings. Magnifying this concern was the rise in inflation to 6 percent in July from 5.1 percent in June, due to higher transport fares and food prices. Inflation for the first seven months hit an average of 4.3 percent, still within the 4-5 percent target set by the government.

Foreign investors unnerved by fears of fresh terror attacks overseas and frustrated over a court ruling junking a Meralco rate hike plea sold down their holdings last week.

Selling pressure was expected on Lopez-owned stocks after the appellate court annulled a June 2003 decision by the ERC allowing Meralco to raise power rates by 17 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

Also ending weaker was Metro Pacific Corp., Ayala Corp., San Miguel Corp. despite a recently announced acquisition of Australian fruit juice maker Berri Ltd.

Investors, however, picked up telecom stocks like Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Globe Telecom on strong second-quarter earnings. PLDT reported a first-half profit at P12 billion while Globe said it earned P6.9 billion.

"The strong earnings of telecom and banking stocks suggests that the bottomline (net income) of most companies may be on the uptrend. SMC also reported that its first half to June net profit rose to P4 billion, up 31 percent on the back of strong sales on the domestic and international markets. Investors will continue to watch out if this trend will be sustained," BPI Trade said.

But Jovis Vistan of AB Capital Securities said that "with the high price of oil and the prevailing terror alert, there's a lot of pressure on the market on a short-term basis."

"Going forward, there won't be much positive surprises expected from the remaining corporate earnings that have yet to be reported. Expectations for earnings growth in most companies have been a little too optimistic to exceed. Moreover, the market is going to remain susceptible to oil prices. And any time we get some bad news in the price of oil, we are going to see some negative stock reaction," Vistan wrote in his weekly report.- *Elizabeth L.Sanchez*

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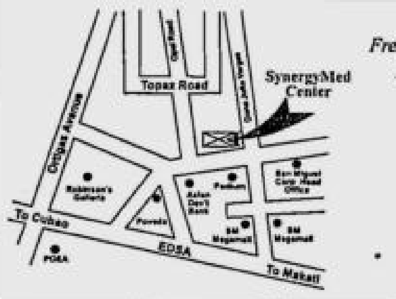

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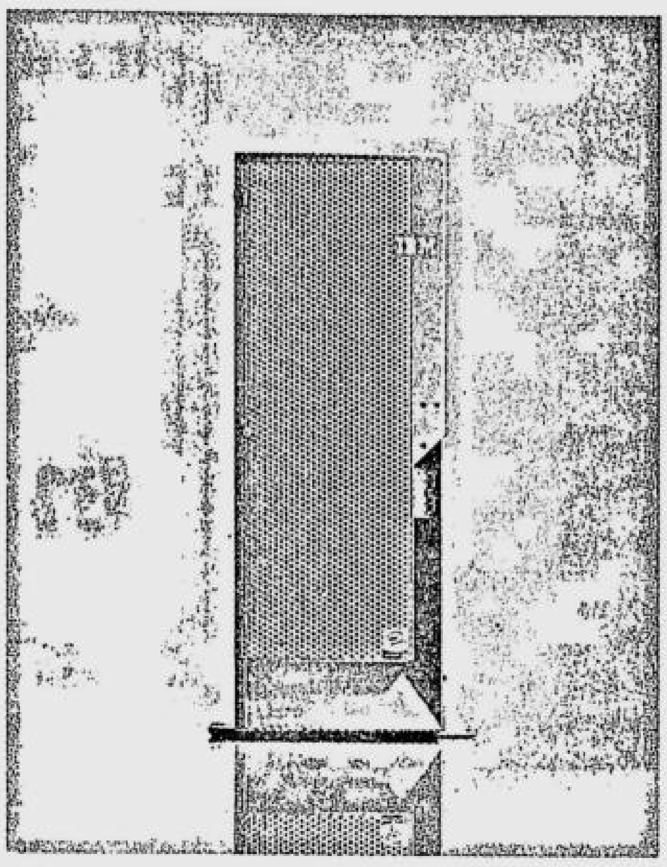

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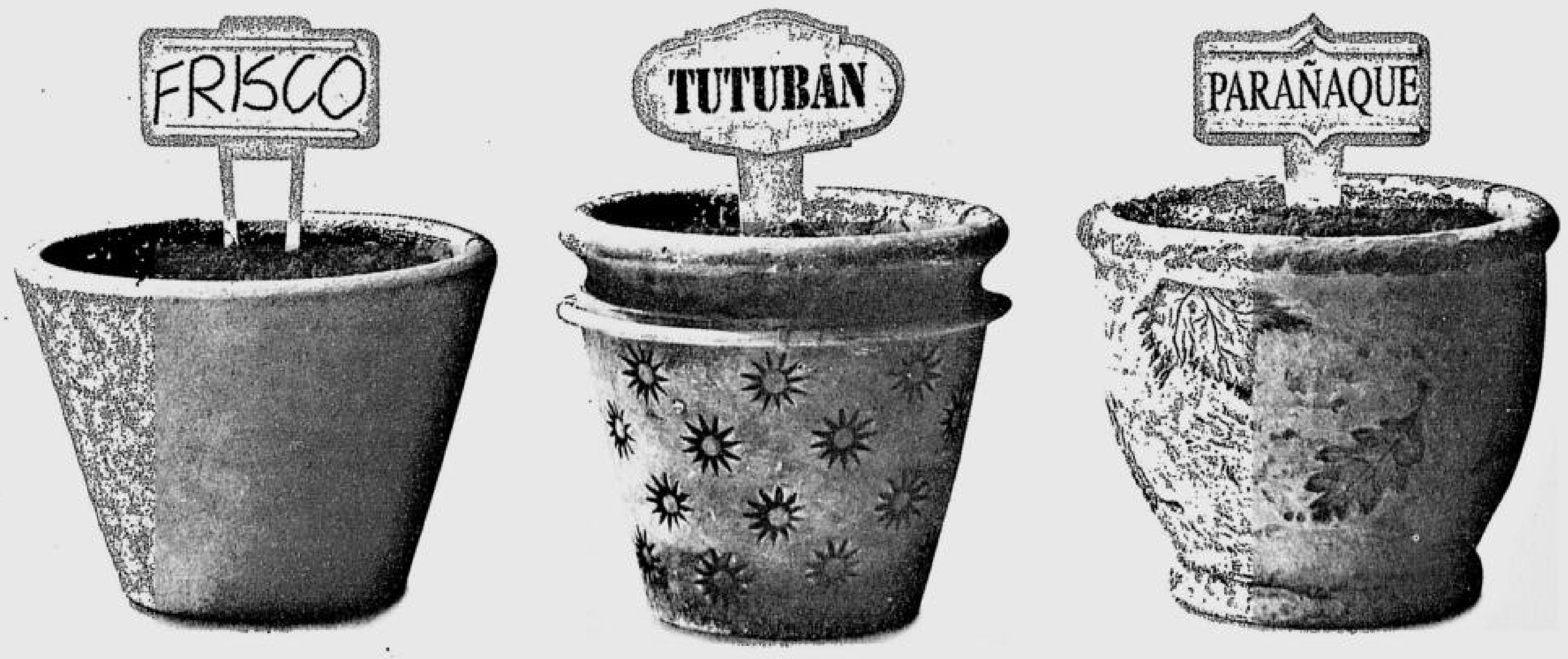

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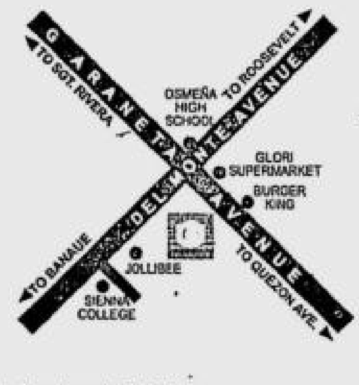

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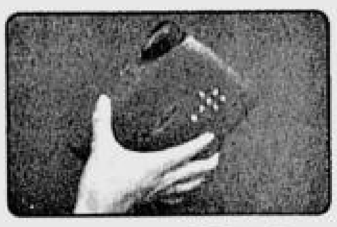

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GENERALI PILIPINAS

Composite approach to customers' insurance needs

THE INSURANCE industry is one of the most saturated in the market today. Top insurance companies in the region as well as in the world compete with locally established insurers for the small pie that is insurable. But latest statistics show that there are about only 1 million insured Filipinos among the bloated 80 million population. And insurance companies are seeing the brighter picture. Yes, there are still millions of Filipino lives to protect, futures to insure, and households and businesses to secure.

General Pilipinas, which started its full operation in 2000, would not be left behind.

Since it offers both life and non-life insurance products, the company can best provide a tailor-fit solution to the insurance needs of clients through one intermediary.

Leading the charge is Generali Pilipinas' new President and Chief Executive Officer Daniel T. Daly, who assumed his post on July 1, 2004.

First five years

Generali Pilipinas has done very well during its first five years of operation. Using year 2003 industry estimates, it now ranks 22nd in the life insurance category from its 30th ranking in 2001. Meanwhile, it is now 13th in the non-life front from its 22nd ranking in 2001.

But what is more important, according to Mr. Daly, was the formation of the foundational elements that makes a company strong.

"Our former CEO and President, Mr. Alfonso P. Garcia, Jr., did an outstanding job of building a core team of professionals during the first five years. This makes this company as solid as any company that you can find in the world," explains Mr. Daly.

Composite approach

Mr. Daly considers having an extensive product portfolio available to the market during Generali Pilipinas' first five years as a great accomplishment in itself.

One product of the Company, which he considers its most innovative offering yet, is the Benefit Enhancement Fund Rider.

"We are growing leaps and bounds with this US-dollar or Peso based guaranteed-interest rate product," he says.

Aside from having an extensive product portfolio, Generali Pilipinas is working towards expanding the company's reach to broader markets through multiple channel strategies.

"We are going to maximize all of our distribution channels," relates Mr. Daly. "For example, we now have Financial Advisors stationed in BDO branches enabling Generali Pilipinas to become better known to BDO clients and to provide them professional advice and services to meet their specific needs. He adds, "Another key growth area for us will be our agency distribution channel. We intend this channel to be a single source for all the insurance needs of Filipino families and small to medium size enterprises. Whatever the need, our professionally trained agents will be able to provide life and non-life product solutions tailored to each risk."

Since Generali Pilipinas is already well known in the broker community and among the corporate clients, it now focuses on the individual, households and the small business market's insurance needs without neglecting the groundwork it has created in the broker and corporate markets.

Corporate culture

Mr. Daly brings with him a management style and corporate culture which he believes would help the company be stronger than it already is.

He summarizes this corporate culture in three aspects, which are empowerment, training and culture of quality.

"Before you can empower people, you have to train, and training will be the hallmark of Generali Pilipinas. All of our distribution channels up to the support group will be the best in its class. We will create a culture of quality in everything we do," Mr. Daly relates.

This corporate culture, he says, would also attract the best people who seek the best opportunities in the market.

Daniel T. Daly, Generali Pilipinas President and Chief Executive officer.

Shareholders

Generali Pilipinas is part of the global Generali Group, which was founded in one of Europe's oldest insurance hubs, Trieste, Italy in 1831. It has 173 years of experience in risk management and provides coverage for all risks, from the most basic protection of individuals and families to the most complex and demanding cover, safeguarding professional activities and enterprises.

Known worldwide as "The Insurer Without Frontiers," Generali is present in more than 50 countries on all six continents around the globe.

In the Philippines, Generali Pilipinas is a joint venture among Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A., Italy's largest corporation and is one of the world's top five insurers, Jerneh Asia Berhad of the Kuok Group, known in the Philippines for the Shangri-La chain of hotels and resorts, and Banco de Oro (BDO) Universal Bank, the financial services flagship of the SM Group of Companies.

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Review of RP exports covered by EU preferential tariff sought

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE EUROPEAN Commission (EC) is seeking a review of Philippine exports that are enjoying zero tariff under Europe's Generalized Scheme of Tariff Preferences (GSP).

The review will be undertaken in the light of the declining Philippine exports to European countries in the last two years.

"We want to find out why it (Europe) seems unattractive to local exporters and why the utilization rate (of the GSP) is low," said Ambassador Jan de Kok , head of the EC delegation to the Philippines, in a briefing last week.

The EU ambassador said he wanted to discuss with President Macapagal-Arroyo measures that would allow the Philippines to maximize the benefits of Europe's GSP scheme.

In a meeting with Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo Jr., De Kok said that of the $1.7 billion in potential exports of the Philippines to the 25-nation European bloc under the GSP scheme, the Philippines was able to ship only $756 million worth of goods in 2003.

The amount was even lower by 19 percent from the $923 million worth of Philippine goods shipped to Europe in the previous year.

De Kok said that while the country's utilization rate of the GSP scheme increased from 36 percent in 2001 to 43 percent in 2002, it remained below average.

Under the GSP mechanism, Philippine products are entitled to reduced duties or preferential tariff rates. The Philippines was the 16th largest country-user of the EU GSP scheme in 2002.

Among the Philippine exports that are entitled to preferential tariff rates are farm, fishery and food products, pharmaceuticals, footwear, clothing, textiles and machinery. Around 9,000 metric tons of Philippine tuna exports, for example, are entitled to a tariff rate of only 12 percent, or half the regular rate of 24 percent.

Europe's GSP scheme was implemented three years ago and will be reviewed in 2006. In December 2003, the EC issued an order extending the GSP scheme until Dec. 31, 2005.

Incentives for GFIs, GOCCs proposed

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT economic team is developing an incentive program for government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) that will exceed their revenue contribution targets. Monetary incentives will encourage state-owned firms to become financially stable and less dependent on national government support, said Finance Undersecretary Nieves Osorio.

Osorio said the inter-agency Development Budget Coordinating Committee-composed of the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM)—would ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue an executive order granting incentives to deserving GOCCs and GFIs.

She said the government might use the same principle adopted by former President Corazon Aquino when she granted incentives to state-owned companies that exceeded their fiscal goals, through Executive Order 518.

"EO 518 was intended to encourage them (state-owned firms) to perform better, but for some reason it was never implemented. Now we want to take the same step," Osorio told reporters.

President Aquino's order was supposed to earmark a certain portion of a well-performing GOCC or GFI's income for financial incentives to be shared by employees in the form of bonuses.

"The bottom line is we want to make state-owned companies financially self-sufficient," said Osorio. She explained that reducing the dependence of GOCCs and GFIs on financial support from the government would help ease the country's serious budget deficit problem.

Group backs Peza . . .

From page B3

portation of 8.26 million kilograms or 330 containers of used clothing materials from January 2003 to March 2004, has failed to account for a shortage of 7.79 million kilos of imported used clothing, and also failed to present documents to show what it did to scraps and excess materials.

Also, Pearl City had been fined heavily in 1999 when—with the use of private vehicles—it removed from the Mactan ecozone 102 bales or about 4,8 tons of used clothing without Peza approval.

Peza had warned the company then that "a similar violation in the future shall be dealt with most severely and shall constitute a sufficient ground for the automatic cancellation of its registration with (Peza)."

Data from Peza showed that the company, formerly known as Pearl City Manufacturing Corp., is American-owned and is engaged in the recycling and processing of used clothing into wool fiber, cotton fiber, polyester fiber, useable clothing and industrial wiping rugs.

Also last week, Peza director general Lilia de Lima vehemently denied accusations from Pearl City plant manager Franklin Ty that she, along with two other Peza officials, tried to extort from his company P2 million to settle the matter.

MBC picks best government agencies

THE MAKATI Business Club recently cited the Department of Agriculture as the third best performing agency of the government.

Business also joined the farm sector in praising the performance of the agency under Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr.

These sectors cited the impressive growth of farm productivity and the "major steps taken by the Arroyo administration in ensuring the country's food sufficiency and security."

In MBC's survey in July, business executives gave the department a 64.4 net satisfaction rating which raised its ranking to No. 3 from No. 8 in January.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Department of Trade and Industry were named the top two best performing agencies.

The survey also showed that Lorenzo was among the top performers in President Macapagal-Arroyo's official family, with close to 70 percent of the respondents strongly favoring his retention in the Cabinet.

The business community said Lorenzo was a key important player in the President's key policy agenda that include jobs, food security and anti-poverty programs.

"It is difficult to comprehend why he has to leave the Cabinet when his programs were among the President's own top 10 objectives," they said. They pointed out that Lorenzo "has led the agriculture to its highest growth rate in 15 years."

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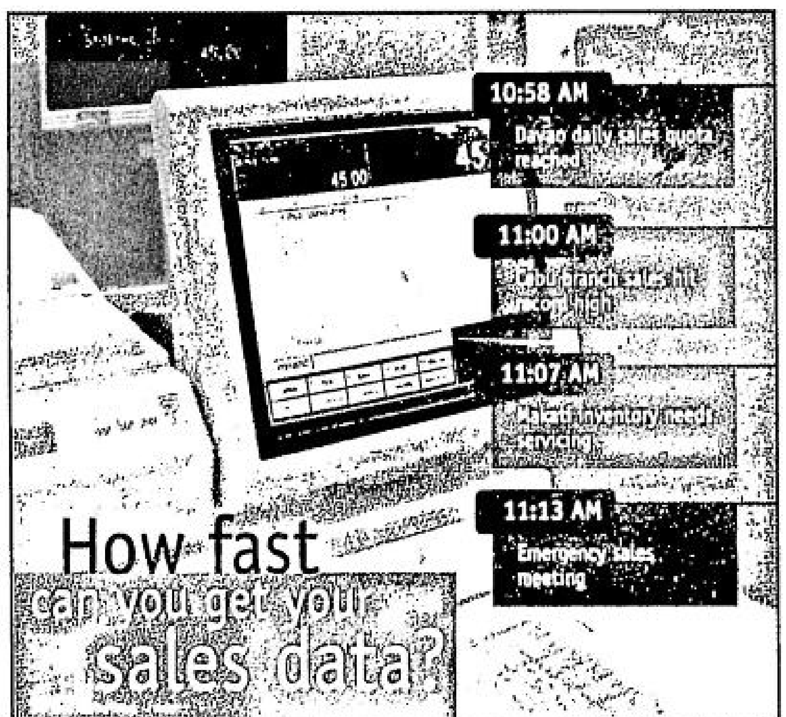
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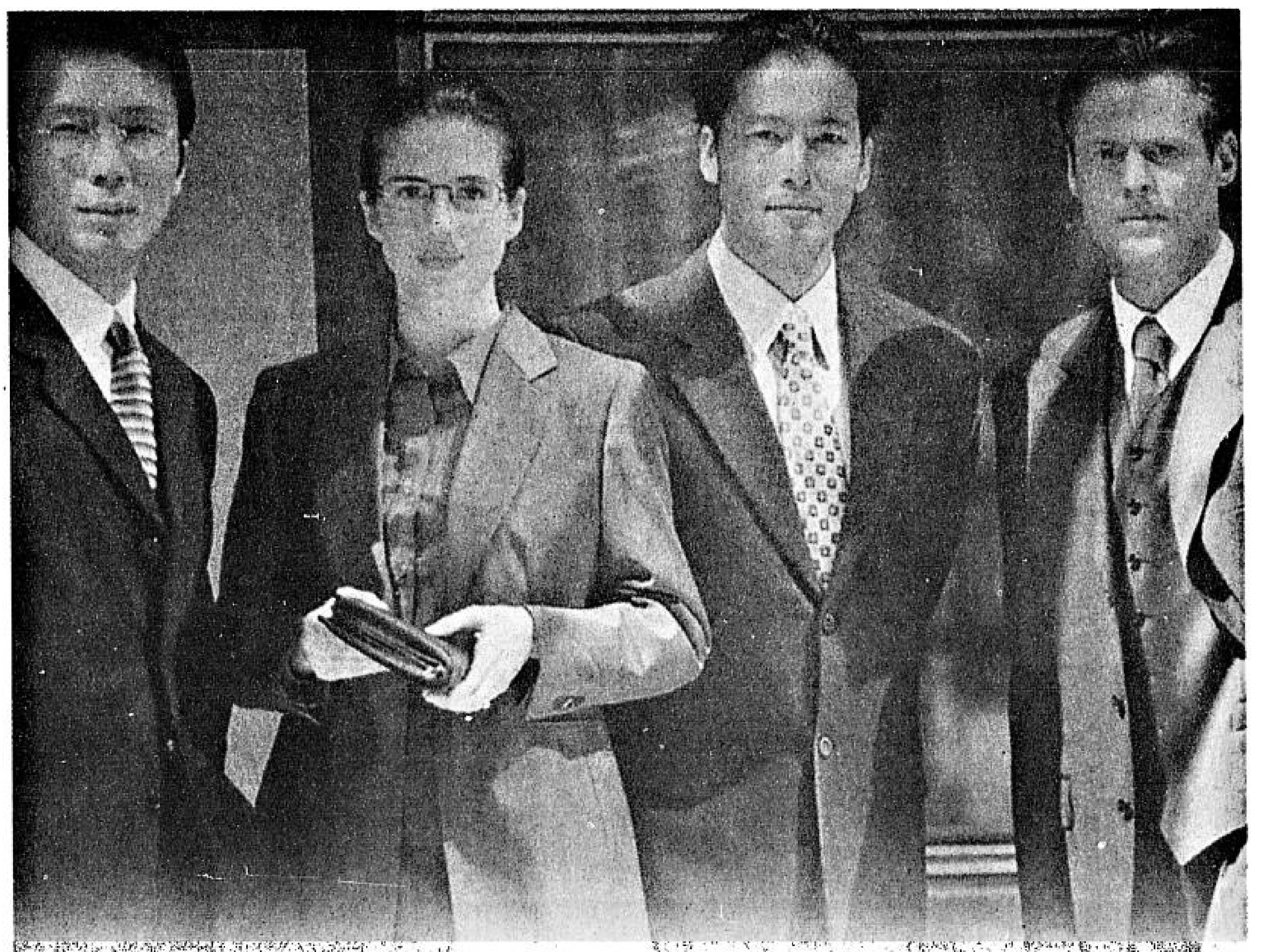

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Fed rates, oil prices to dictate tempo on Wall St.

NEW YORK—Wall Street's focus will be squarely on the Federal Reserve's interest-rate decision this week after weak jobs data raised questions about the pace of future hikes, while concerns about oil prices near $45 a barrel are likely to keep US stocks under pressure.

Earnings releases will slow to a trickle as the second-quarter reporting season comes to a close. But a few key companies are still set to report, such as Cisco Systems and Wal-Mart Stores Inc.

The economy will get most of the attention, with the centerpoint of the week the Federal Reserve's interest-rate decision on Tuesday.

Retail sales data for July on Thursday and the University of Michigan's August consumer sentiment survey on Friday also will be eyed.

However, analysts see little relief from the market's current malaise, as investors fret about oil prices at 21-year highs, geopolitical worries and the economy losing steam.

US stocks closed at the lowest levels of the year on Friday after weaker-than-expected data from the July jobs report stirred investors' fears that the US economic recovery may be weak.

For the week, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 3 percent, closing on Friday at 9,815.33, while the Standard & Poor's 500 Index also dropped 3 percent, ending at 1,063.97.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq sank 6 percent during the week, finishing Friday's session at 1,776.89.

Despite this, Fed officials are still expected to add to June's quarter-point increase in interest rates and hike its fed funds rate target by another quarter percentage point to 1.5 percent on Tuesday afternoon, in order to ward off longer-term inflationary pressures.

While Friday's disappointing July jobs data made a rate increase less of a done deal, analysts think the main gray area is about the pace of rate hikes in the future.

"There's uncertainty about where the Fed will be at the year's end and whether it will skip a meeting, but as far as next week goes, the market expects a quarter-point rise. It would really be a stunner if the Fed didn't do that," said John Shin, US economist at Lehman Brothers.

Rising interest rates are generally bad news for stocks because of the impact on companies' borrowing costs and consumer spending.

While rising interest rates are a dampener, investors are more worried by stubbornly high oil prices. US crude futures hit historic peaks last week—rising as high as $44.77 a barrel before settling at $43.95. That leap near $45 took the price of US crude to its highest in the 21 years that oil futures have been traded on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Reuters

PEDESTRIANS are reflected on a share prices board in downtown Tokyo. Japanese share prices fell at the Tokyo Stock Exchange as retail investors sold stocks across the board after declines on Wall Street caused by record high oil prices and renewed concerns on US economic growth. AFP

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IMF keeps '04 forecast

ENTEBBE, Uganda—International Monetary Fund Managing Director Rodrigo Rato on Friday dismissed concerns that high oil prices would reduce global growth in 2004, saying the IMF did not expect to lower its April forecast of 4.6 percent.

"We see a strong recovery of the world economy that in our opinion doesn't give us reason to review our prediction of last April," Rato told reporters after a meeting of East African leaders here.

US crude oil prices hit a new record high of $44.77 a barrel at one stage on Friday before settling down at $43.95.

Rato said the IMF was advising governments to prioritize their energy policies and adapt them to the new environment of higher oil prices, which he said would continue in the medium term.

"Energy issues have to be re-addressed in a new environment that affects both demand and supply," Rato said.

He said growth in oil-consuming countries would in part be limited by the "oil crisis," and he called for sound policies that would make consumers aware of the price of oil.

Rato said oil-producing countries should save the profits from the oil spike to guard against leaner times and avoid macroeconomic imbalances in their economies.

Reuters

Crude oil prices slip

NEW YORK—World oil prices set new all-time highs before retreating as a Russian court threw another financial lifeline to troubled oil giant Yukos.

New York's light, sweet crude for delivery September bolted to a record $44.77 before closing at $43.95, down 46 cents.

Brent North Sea crude oil for September shot to a record $41.50, then closed at $40.63, down 49 cents.

Prices were roiled by the doomed-again, saved-again saga of Russian oil titan Yukos.

A Moscow court ruled that Russian justice ministry bailiffs had no right to freeze the assets of Yuganskneftegaz, Yukos' largest oil producing subsidiary, accounting for around 60 percent of its output.

Mid-week, bailiffs had thrown the oil titan a lifeline by allowing it access to bank accounts to carry on operating as it struggles to repay a massive tax bill.

The following day, the bailiffs reversed the decision, sending the world energy markets in a spin.

"People don't know how to react to the Yukos court decisions going back and forth in the last couple of days," said Wachovia analyst Jason Schenker.

The slide in prices Friday was not too severe, however, he said.

Yukos' assets were frozen last month and the company was to be sold as bailiffs tried to recover $3.4 billion in back taxes.

Traders reacted with some confusion to the latest twist.

"The Yukos situation is not very clear," said Prudential Bache broker Tony Machacek in London.

Prices had been lifted earlier in the day by news of a fire late Thursday at a BP gasoline refinery in Houston, Texas. But BP said Friday the refinery unit was undamaged by the fire and had resumed operations.

New York's contract could test $45 a barrel within days and even breach $50 during the US and European winter, some analysts said.

Traders largely shrugged at Opec's latest assurances that it was on standby to increase oil supplies by up to 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) to help to cool prices.

"We are ready to increase production between 1.0-1.5 million barrels per day and this issue will be discussed in the Sept. 14 meeting in Vienna," Opec president Purnomo Yusgiantoro told reporters in Jakarta.

High oil prices, combined with a weaker-than-expected US jobs report for July, also depressed world stock markets.

In New York, the Dow Jones industrials average of 30 top stocks plunged 147.70 points, or 1.48 percent, to finish at at 9,815.33, the lowest since November 2003. AFP

Google's good-vibes IPO hits sour note

SAN FRANCISCO—All the glee and glamour surrounding Google Inc.'s IPO is rapidly dissolving into feelings of dread and derision about the online search engine's long-awaited stock market debut.

The backlash has been mounting since Google's July 26 disclosure about its plans to sell 24.6 million shares at $108 to $135 apiece—an unprecedented per-share price for a US initial public offering.

The second guessing has become even more prevalent in recent days amid widespread confusion about the unorthodox auction Google is using to distribute its IPO shares and worries about potential legal problems involving how the company doled out stock in the past.

Google also hasn't set a specific date for the start of the auction, although its latest SEC documents indicate it might happen this month.

To make matters worse, investors are souring on the stocks of many Internet companies, amplifying the questions about whether Google's IPO can possibly live up to its tremendous hype.

"This could turn out to be a real dud," said Tom Taulli, a longtime IPO analyst who runs the website, Currentofferings.com.

A Google spokeswoman declined to comment Friday, citing securities laws that limit the public remarks companies can make before their IPOs.

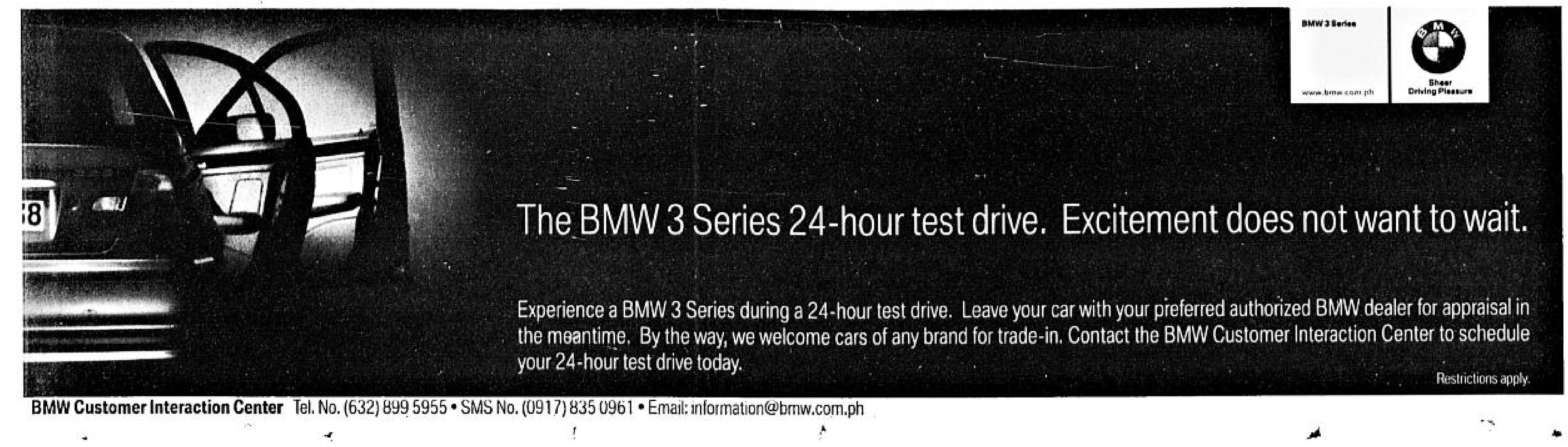
Those restrictions essentially have left Google defenseless against its critics, a handicap helping to propel the attacks against the IPO.

"Part of the reason for this backlash is that the only voices we are hearing are potential buyers and they don't want to do or say anything to promote the stock that would drive the price higher," said Barry Randall, portfolio manager for the First American Technology Fund.

Google's target IPO price appears to be the company's biggest public relations problem.

AP

GOOGLE co-founders Sergey Brin, left, and Larry Page. The glamour surrounding Google Inc.'s long-awaited IPO is rapidly dissolving into feelings of dread and derision in recent days amid widespread confusion about the unorthodox auction Google is using to distribute its IPO shares. AP



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CORONADO, RAUL MANAHAN	TEKTITE
PANOTES, RANDY BEDANIA	DIAMOND
SIY, MANUEL ONG	CHINA JADE

Congratulations, Midyear "Challenge 204" Qualifiers!

We are so proud to see another bumper crop of qualifiers who will be flying to Hongkong for some intense shopping and leisure time. Last year, our delegation for the foreign trip was only composed of 10 agents. This year, we have a record 35 qualifiers who have also proven their expertise in our banner product, Unit -Link.

We had a very explosive first semester and I am certain that with your enthusiasm and relentless pursuit of our goals, you will once more blaze away all the way ~~to~~ December. In the meantime, enjoy your awards night and be proud that you are among the very best that your country has to offer!

Bobby G. Madrid
President and CEO
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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Gano Excel Phils pays tribute to its distributors

IT WAS a night of glamour and prestige for the distributors and guests of Gano Excel (Phils) Inc, a multi-level marketing company engaged in the distribution of Ganoderma-based herbal products, in its recently concluded fifth anniversary celebration held at the Reception Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) last July 3.

Distributors and guests in Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao joined by delegates who came from Gano Excel USA and Canada were all excited to witness and enjoy the festivities in commemoration of the company's success in reaching its fifth year in the MLM industry.

The company started in 1999 with only a few distributors and a small staff headed by the general manager, Bernardo Chua. Now, Gano Excel (Phils) Inc has more than 350,000 distributors, six (6) branches and more than a hundred stockist centers nationwide. Its mother company is based in Kedah, Malaysia with affiliations worldwide.

In his opening address Chua said, "This is just the beginning of our journey. Our success today should be an on-going process that we practice everyday, so that, excellence will become a habit. With our continuous expansion in the global market, superior quality, highly effective and affordable products, Gano Excel is certainly soaring high spreading good health and income opportunity to many people. To all our valued distributors, your continued support through all these years is highly appreciated. With your help, reaching greater heights will be possible as our family grows bigger and stronger in the years to come."

Among the guests who attended the celebration were dignitaries coming from Gano Excel's global affiliations: Ooi Keng Seng, president of Gano Excel (Malaysia), Yogesh Letchmalal, international business development officer (Malaysia), David Moses, vice president for marketing (Canada), and Joven Cabasag, executive vice-president for marketing (USA).

To enliven the occasion, there were guest performances of the Whiplash Dancers and Ana Fegi, who captivated the audience with her powerful and beguiling voice. The highlight of the celebration was the recognition of all Gano Excel Achievers, specifically, the crowning ceremony of the Crown Diamond Directors. A special tribute bestowed to the highest level holders, the most coveted honor aimed for by Gano Excel networkers. These are the members of the millionaires club, the successful achievers of the company whose dream of good health and luxurious lifestyle were realized because of Gano Excel.

PAMILYANG OFWS-SMES SINGING STAR CHAMPION

Suzanne Beatrice Remollo (second from left), a niece of an overseas Filipino worker in Saudi Arabia, was declared champion during the finals of the Search for the Pamilyang Overseas Filipino Workers-Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Singing Star 2004 which was held recently at the Megatrade Hall 2, SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. Others in photo are (from left): Col. Ricardo Nolasco Jr., vice chair of the Air Materiel Wing Savings and Loan Association Inc; George Arriola, president of the Pamilyang OFW-SME Network Foundation Inc; Myra Mariano of the Ang OFW Ngayon; and Philip Baldo, vice president of the POFW-SMENFI. The said competition was one of the highlights of the 3rd Pamilyang OFWs-SMEs Expo and the 1st Pamilyang OFWs-SMEs Congress which were held last July 16 to 18 at the Megatrade Hall 2.

Ajgep thanks PRC

THE ASSOCIATION of Junior Geodetic Engineers of the Phils (Ajgep) by its national president engineer Reynaldo A. Carpio lauded the judicious action of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) chair Antonieta Fortuna-Ibe and engineer Herminio Pada chair of the board of Geodetic Engineering in coming out with the resolution granting the first 56 applicants for registration without examination as geodetic engineer.

Ajgep chair Eldred Tumbocon said, cognizant of the role of the PRC in professionalizing the geodetic engineering profession, the Ajgep expresses their appreciation to the commission for their endeavor to upgrade as called for in the Implementation of the Law R.A. 8560 as amended by R.A. No. 9200 and its implementing rules and regulation (IRR). It is hoped that the commission continues their support for the speedy evaluation and eventual award for the more than 5,700 junior geodetic engineers remain to be upgraded as full pledged geodetic engineers.

Based on the information gathered by Ajgep secretary general engineer Jeanette S. Co, so far, the PRC record shows that there's only about 326 received applications and about 248 acted upon by the Board while 222 of them finally acted by the chair and 60 applicants are so far been approved/ To date, 56 applications has been granted without examination as geodetic engineer which comprises the first ever batch to be given the ceremonial oath to be administered by the PRC on the Aug. 9, 2 p.m. at the Manila Hotel.

This opportunity mandated by the law provides only three (3) years to avail, hence, we call upon all incumbent junior geodetic engineers to submit prescribed requirement with the PRC, to enable you to be included in the succeeding oath-taking expected to happen this coming October concurrent with the planned Ajgep National Convention this year.

ProductFILES

De-stressing dad with Stressgon

DAD'S do more than just bring home the bacon nowadays. Dad's today find themselves doing duties like the groceries, the laundry, cooking and so forth. Topped off with the reality of living in an unstable economy, dads are surely ridden with tons of stress. And stress can be quite harmful to the body over time. Luckily for dad, there's Stressgon from E. Excel Int'l. Stressgon is designed to nourish the nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord, nerves and sensory receptors. Stressgon produces balance and harmony within the body and helps reduce complications within the nervous system. It is designed to enhance the ability to concentrate and to alleviate complications brought on from everyday life. And because it allows for better concentration, Stressgon will also help dad sleep soundly. For inquiries, call 811-0837.

BPI LAUNCHES EXPRESS WORLD OF BANKING CONVENIENCE

On its 153rd year of leadership in banking innovation, the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) introduces Express World. BPI Express World highlights all the delivery channels like the BPI Express Teller, Express Phone, Express Online, BPI Direct and BPI Trade as well as the different payment services such as BPI Check Free payments, Express Paid and of course, Express Payment System. Truly, the BPI banking experience is like no other, a convenience which has become integral to every Filipino's lifestyle both here and abroad. Shown in photo during the launch of the Express World of Convenience (from left) are: Rev. Luis Antonio Tagle, BPI SVP Jesus Razon, BPI chief operating officer Aurelio Montinola III and BPI chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala.

FORMING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Cosmeceuticals Phils Inc, recently formalized the appointment of Diethelm (Phils) Inc as the exclusive distributor of Cosmoderm Skin Care and Toiletry products in a contract signing at the Holiday Inn Galleria Manila. Standing (from left): Mani Ramasami and Jimmy Tan from Personal Care Creation Sdn. Bhs., Malaysia. Seated (from left): Tommy Ng (sales director - Diethelm), Juergen Hirschberg (president and GM - Diethelm), Vic Octaviano (sales manager - Cosmeceuticals) and Beth Tamano (marketing manager - Cosmeceuticals). The contract signing took place during the sales presentation by Cosmeceuticals Phils Inc and its strategic partners for marketing.

TRAVELEX, ASIAN FX PARTNERSHIP

Travelex Money Transfer Ltd, a member of the Travelex Group, the world's largest non-bank foreign exchange company, recently appointed AsianFX Money Exchange as its Master Network Representative in the Philippines. Photo shows (from left, seated) Bei Rivera, AsianFX operations head; Pepo Nuñez, AsianFX president and chair; Nelson Leung, regional director, Travelex Asia Pacific and ISC Region; Lily Ma, Travelex operations and training officer. Standing (from left) are Hector Juliano, AsianFX finance and administration officer and Mike Cueto, AsianFX project analyst.

Pronove T Associate

SBDI MOVES TO LKG TOWER

Subic Bay Distribution Inc (SBDI), recently relocated its corporate headquarters to LKG Tower on Ayala Avenue, Makati City. SBDI has recently signed a new lease agreement with ICEC Land Corporation through the agency efforts of Pronove Tai & Associates (Phils) Inc. Shown in photo during the contract signing are: (seated from left) Audrey Shih, ICEC Land Corp representative; Aurora Snih, ICEC Land VP; Siripong Phoungpaka, PTT president and CEO; and Maita Acosta, SBDI business affairs and administrative officer; (standing, from left) Dianne Yorro, Pronove Tai & Associates (Phils) Inc marketing coordinator; Monique Cornelio-Pronove, Pronove Tai & Associates (Phils) Inc country managing director; and Mancy Joaquin, SBDI network engineer.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office
San Francisco, Agusan del Sur

NOTICE OF COVERAGE AND FIELD INVESTIGATION

Pursuant to Section 7 of R A 6657 otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, landowners, listed below with their landholdings and location are hereby notified that their landholdings are now covered under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

LANDOWNER	LOCATION	TITLE NO.	LOT NO.	AREA	DATE OCCULAR INSPECTION
1. TERESITA BRIONES	MABUHAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-2277) 1316	817, PLS-224	8.3279	9/13/4
2. FRANCISCO BRIONES	MABUHAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-3444	829, PLS-224	7.7093	9/13/4
3. PAULINA JAPSON	TAGUBAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-3699)-P-2350	771, PLS-224	11.6816	9/14/4
4. JOSEFINA & SATURNINO BALDUMAR	TAGUBAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-2412	818, PLS-224	7.3453	9/14/4
5. QUEZON GAMIAO	ILIHAN, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-495	205, PLS-223	7.9621	9/14/4
6. SUSANO LUMASAG	ILIHAN, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-716	122, PLS-223	7.6049	9/14/4
7 MARCIANO GAQUIT	GAMAO, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-6793) P-4901	1099, PLS-225	8.0866	9/15/4
8 REY MONTALBAN	POBLACION, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-4395	65, PLS-223	7.6498	9/15/4
9. MARGARITO CUTAMORA	EL RIO, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-2186	126, GSS-840	5.3902	9/15/4
10. NENA MARUGA	ZILLOVIA, TALACOGON, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-11082	324, PLS-750	8.2769	9/16/4
11. FULGENCIO CASAS	MAHAYAHAY, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(T-226) 160	2, PLS-223	9.4106	9/16/4
12. SIMPLICIO BALIGWAT	TABON-TABON SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-2108	189, GSS-840	6.6885	9/16/4
13. DBP	SAN TORIBIO, ESPERANZA AGUSAN, DEL SUR	T-4010	1464, PLS-443	23.9965	9/17/4
TOTAL				120.1322	

In this connection may we invite the landowners or their authorized representatives to a field investigation to be conducted on the date indicated herein During the investigation, landholders may choose or pinpoint their retained area in accordance with Section 6 of R.A. 6657, which area should be more or less contiguous. Failure to attend said meeting or to choose retained area will mean that the office is given the discretion to identify the same.

Landowners are also advised to bring Statement of Production and Net Income on the said landholdings to be used as input in the determination of the land value.

Under Executive Order No 405, dated 14 June 1990, we shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to determine the land value of the said properties being acquired pursuant to Section 17 or R.A. 6657. As soon as we receive the Memorandum of Valuation from the LBP, we shall advise the landowners of the computed land value of the properties.

(Sgd) FE B. MERCADO
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI--Aug. 9, 16 & 23, 2004)

CITIGROUP DONATES ANOTHER SCHOOL BUILDING

Citigroup Philippines recently donated its 12th school building under Project Blue (Buildings for Literacy, Understanding and Education) to Upper Bicutan Elementary School. The project is being implemented in cooperation with the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) and the Department of Education (DepEd). Photo shows Citigroup Private Bank country manager Richard Smith sealing the time capsule during the groundbreaking ceremony. Also in the picture are (from left) Upper Bicutan Elementary School principal Dr. Rosalina Cruz, PBSP's Dindo Guevara, Department of Education Schools Division superintendent for Taguig-Pateros Dr. Rolando Magno and assistant Schools Div. superintendent Dra. Putian, Citigroup corporate affairs head Lillibeth V. Fajardo and Citigroup private bank VP Josie Carballo.

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77 Sct. Chuatoco 3-4BR
2car grge 0917-5271188

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Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF BAIS
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Bais invites interested suppliers/bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Installation of Geographical Information System (GIS) – Based Revenue Generation System with the following particulars:

I. GIS
  A. READILY AVAILABLE DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIC DATA
  B. READILY AVAILABLE GIS APPLICATION FOR PLANNING USE
II. REVENUE GENERATIONS SYSTEMS
  A. SOFTWARE
    1. Software Applications
      a. Real Property Tax System
      b. Business Permit & Licensing System
      c. Engineering Permits System
      d. Tricycle Registration System
  B. TRAINING, TECHNICAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT
  C. DATABASE CONSTRUCTION
III. HARDWARE AND LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN)
  A. Installation, configuration and commissioning for the following offices
    – City Mayor's Office
    – City Assessor's Office
    – City Engineer's Office
    – City Planning & Development Office
    – City Treasurer's Office
  B. Hardware Maintenance
    – Training, technical support and maintenance.
IV. SOFTWARE LICENSES
V. TIME FRAME
    – System must be completely installed and operational within three (3) months after signing of Contract Agreement.
VI. WARRANTY
    – One (1) year warranty on hardware and software.

Fifteen Million Pesos (Php15,000,000.00) is being earmarked for this project.

The approved budget of the contract for this year is P7,500,000.00 to be taken from the General Fund. And the balance of P7,500,000.00 will be made available next year to be taken from 20% Development Fund.

TERMS OF PAYMENT:

To be paid in two (2) equal installments. First installment in the amount of SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND (Php7,500,000.00) PESOS to be paid this year, full payment will be on the 2nd quarter of CY 2005 in the amount of P7,500,000.00.

The following documents are required for submission:

A. ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS:
  1. DTI or SEC Certificate of Registration
  2. Valid and current Mayor's Business Permit
  3. VAT/Non-VAT Certificate of Registration
  4. Sworn Statement that bidder is not blacklisted or barred from bidding by the Government or any of its agencies.
  5. Sworn statement of any on going and completed government and private contracts or purchase orders within the relevant period, including contracts awarded but not yet started, and track record of projects completed which are similar in nature and complexity to the contract to be bid.
  6. Audited Financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly authorized representatives, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the bidder's total and current assets and liabilities.
  7. Copy of the Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) or a commitment from a licensed bank to extend to it a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid, or a cash deposit certificate, in an amount not lower than that set by this City in the bidding documents, which shall be at least equal to 10% of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.
  8. Valid joint venture agreement, in case of a joint venture.
  9. Sworn statement that each of the documents submitted in satisfaction of the eligibility requirements is an authentic and original copy, or a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original, complete, and that all statements and information provided therein are true and correct.
B. TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS:
  1. The Bid Security as to form, amount and validity period
  2. Authorization of representative thru a Special Power of Attorney
  3. Production/Delivery schedule
  4. Manpower Requirements
  5. After-sales service/parts, if applicable
  6. Technical Specifications
  7. A sworn affidavit of the bidder that it is not related to the head of the procuring entity by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree.
  8. Sworn statement that bidder shall abide with whatever stipulations, terms & conditions agreed upon by the procuring entity and the prospective bidder during the pre-bid conference.
C. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS:
  1. Bid prices in the Bill of Quantities
  2. The recurring and the maintenance costs, if applicable

All bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Security, payable to the City of Bais, in any of the following schedule:

Form of Security	MINIMUM AMOUNT in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One (1%) percent
2. Bank Guarantee	One & a half (1-½%) percent
3. Surety Bond	Two & a half (2-½%) percent
4. Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred (100%) percent

Bids and Bids Securities shall be valid for a reasonable period and shall be indicated in the bidding documents, but in no case shall exceed 120 calendar days from the date of the opening of bids.

Bid documents can be obtained at the BAC Secretariat, c/o Office of the City General Services Officer, this City, Tel. No. (035) 541-5114, (035) 402-8115 and (035) 541-5302 anytime during office hours and upon payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 per set; and can also be inquired for further particulars.

Pre-bid conference shall be held on Aug. 16, 2004 at the Office of the City Mayor, at 10:00 A.M.

Eligibility, Technical, and Financial documents shall be submitted together each in separate sealed envelopes on Aug. 27, 2004 at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the City Mayor, this City, at 2:00 P.M., at which date, place, time, said envelopes shall be opened in the presence of the members of the BAC, the attending bidders, the observers, or their duly authorized representative.

All other particulars relative to the procurement process shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 otherwise known as the Gov't. Procurement Reform Act.

The City Gov't. of Bais reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare a failure of bidding, to waive any defects or informalities therein and to accept such bids as maybe considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) CARMELINO L. MORALES
City General Services Officer
Chairman

(PDI-Aug 3 & 9 2004)

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And

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (INTERMAP)

Announces with deepest sorrow
the demise of its

Founding President

PONCIANO CASTILLO MARQUEZ

who passed away on 05 August 2004

His remains lie in state at the Jose Rizal Chapel,
La Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park,
Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, August 10, 2004,
at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City,
after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

The faithful are requested to pray for the repose of his soul.

Dr. Doroteo "Dodge" Lopez Espina

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on August 6, 2004 at the age of 69.

His beloved wife **Mila**, children **Harold** and **Dorothy Over**, **William** and **Carmen Espina**, **Melanie** and **Antonio Alvarez**, **Robert**, **Angeli** and **Matthew Mendoza**, **Janice**; grandchildren **Chicoy**, **Miki**, **Tomas**, **Isa**, **Maki**, **Anton**, **Diggy**, **Henna**, **Marco**, **Bea**, **Migo**, **Kyla**; brothers and sister; nephews and nieces; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City.

Interment to be announced later.

JOHN MERT "JM" B. ANGELES

Bestowed on us by the Creator's blessing on July 26th, 1979
and recalled to his Kingdom on August 6th, 2004.

We, his family and relatives, will take him to his ascension
at 3:00 p.m., Thursday, August 12th, 2004, at the Manila Memorial Park.

Thank you for your prayers.

Those who wish to join us are requested to wear a combination of any white top with denims.

JUDGE FRANCISCO F. FANLO, JR.

Executive Judge
RTC, Branch 82-Odiongan, Romblon

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on August 8, 2004.

His beloved wife **JOY**; children **RACHÉLLE & BING**, **MARIFA & MAGS** and **FRANZ**; grandchildren **SHEIKKA & CHESCA**, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Nacional Memorial Homes (Chapel 3-A), G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be brought to Odiongan, Romblon on Wednesday, August 11, 2004.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 15, 2004 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at Odiongan, Romblon.

> **"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."**
> — 2 Corinthians 5:8

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Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
NEDA-sa-Pasig #12 Blessed J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NEDA Bids and Awards Committee (NBAC) invites consulting firms to register for accreditation and apply for eligibility, and to bid for the project. NEDA Information Systems Strategic Plan (ISSP). The approved budget for the contract is One Million Pesos (P1,000,000.00) from the NEDA Information Network Project.

The general objective of this project is to assess the current NEDA ISSP for the purpose of formulating a new NEDA ISSP for the period 2005 to 2010. This is to ensure that it is consistent with the priorities and strategies prescribed in the Government Information Systems Plan and the Electronic Commerce Act (R.A. 8792).

The deadline for submission of Eligibility Requirements, Technical and Financial Proposals in separate sealed envelopes shall be on or before **September 9, 2004**, 12:00 noon to be submitted by a duly authorized representative to the NBAC Secretariat, G/F Legal Staff, NEDA sa Pasig. Bids submitted after the deadline for the submission of bids will not be accepted.

Bid documents shall be issued by the NBAC Secretariat starting **August 9-23, 2004** from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00. The Pre-bid Conference shall be held on **August 24, 2004**, 10:00 a.m. at the Legal Staff.

The NBAC reserves the right to annul the bidding process, reject any or all of the bids, waive any defect or informality therein or accept such bid which it may consider to be most advantageous and beneficial to the government without incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for the action of the NEDA.

(Sgd.) **ADG ROLANDO G. TUNGPALAN**
NBAC Chairperson

(PDI - Aug. 9 & 15, 2004)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines – Provident Fund is inviting interested actuaries to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Actuarial Revaluation of New Health Care Plan Fund

Scope of Services:

1. Determine the actuarial/financial soundness of the New Health Care Plan Fund and the appropriate premium required for each benefit provided by NHCPF, on the basis of utilization rates; and
2. Conduct claims analysis on the various types of benefits provided by the NHCPF.

Deadline for submission of application for eligibility and bid shall be on August 16, 2004.

The ACTUARY shall submit the following supporting documents together with the sealed bid:

1. Proof that the bidder has at least three (3) years experience in the actuarial valuation.
2. Company's track record together with list of clients.
3. References from previous clients.

DBP-PF reserves the right to accept and reject any or all bids/offers/proposals. The decision of the Bank is final and binding.

For more inquiries, please call Mr. Cirio S. Kabamalan at telephone number 8191360.

(PDI–August 9, 2004)

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MACTAN CEBU
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
LAPU-LAPU CITY PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (MCIAA) through its Bids and Award Committee (BAC) is inviting interested parties to apply for eligibility and to submit Sealed Bids for the supply of "Labor and Materials for One year Contract for Janitorial Services and Maintenance of Passenger Terminal at Mactan International Airport". The Approved Budget for the Contract is P7,908,731.16.
2. To be registered, interested bidders must submit the following eligibility documents (in case of photocopied documents, the original must be presented):
   a. DTI/SEC Registration Certificate, whichever appropriate under the law
   b. Mayor's Permit, Municipal License
   c. Taxpayer's Identification Number/BIR Registration Certificate
   d. List of Clients for the last five (5) years
   e. Audited Financial Statement for the last 2 calendar years stamped received by BIR or its duly accredited & authorized institution.
   f. Government Electronic Procurement System (GEPS) Certificate of Registration
3. Submission of Letter of Intent with Eligibility Documents will be on **August 3 to 13, 2004** Distribution of Bid Documents will be on **August 19 to 23, 2004** at the BAC's Office from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P4,000.00

Pre-Bid Conference	August 26, 2004 @ 9:00 a.m.
Bid Opening	September 7, 2004 @ 10:00 a.m. (closing 9:45 a.m.)

4. For more information, please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone number 3402486 local or 2050/2051 or at telefax 341-4617
5. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9184.
6. MCIAA reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, assume no obligations whatsoever of indemnity to the bidders any expense of loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) VERONICA S. ORDOÑEZ
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Aug. 2 & 9, 2004)

The Organization Development Network (ODPN) sponsored a talk on "Understanding Lean" on it 3rd KAPIHAN sa ODPN held last July 20, 2004 at the San Mig Café, San Miguel Properties Bldg., at the Ortigas Center. Shown in the picture are (left to right) Ms. Lot Ortiz-Luis, President of ODPN, Mr. Victor Bocaling, Managing Director of Swedish Philippines. Inc. and Mr. Renato Cardinal, Senior Consultant of Neville-Clark of Neville Clarke Philippines, Inc.. Seated is Ms. Tina Bonifacio, ODPN DevCom chair. Mr. Cardinal discussed the concepts of "Lean Management" while Mr. Bocaling delved on the applications, successes and challenges in the implementation of Lean Management at Swedish Match Philippines, Inc. The next ODPN KAPIHAN set on September 21, 8 a.m. at San Mig Café, will discuss the concepts, and feasibilities of Business Process Outsourcing. Please call Au on 892-2895/96/98 for inquiries and reservation.

Malacañang website defaced; police set to investigate

By Erwin Lemuel Oliva
Contributor

HACKERS defaced the official Philippine government portal www.gov.ph last week amid the launch of the Government Computer Security Incident Response Team at the Philippine National Police headquarters, an official of the Internet service provider that hosts the site confirmed to Infotech.

Wilson Chua, president of Bitstop, said the hackers managed to deface the website by compromising a web-based account that had access to the administration and management backend of the website.

"The hackers were able to impersonate a valid user in the system. Thus they were able to deface the website," Chua said.

He, however, declined to comment on how the hackers were able to impersonate the valid user.

Bitstop was able to trace the attack to Morocco, Chua said.

An e-mail from Cesar Yadao from Isabela informed Infotech early Thursday of the defacement of the website.

In an e-mail message, he pointed out that the gov.ph website was defaced by a group called "Scriptx Morrocans Hackers."

The defaced website contained the message: "Hacked By Scriptx Moroccans Hackers F*** bush And SHaroon."

Chua confirmed that the messages had been posted on the website.

The gov.ph website was down, with pages displaying the message "http: 500 Internal server error." The site returned to normal at 2:30 p.m. Thursday.

The Presidential Management Staff updates the content of the government portal.

Local police are set to investigate the incident, said Police Superintendent Gilbert Sosa of the Anti-Transnational Crime Division of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

A check on the Zone-H.org website showed that hackers have defaced several Philippine government websites apart from the Philippine government portal "gov.ph" last week.

Zone-H.org collates websites that are defaced by hackers around the world.

Based on its digital archives, other Philippine government websites vandalized last week included the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Environmental Management Bureau, and the Revenue Integrity Protection Service.

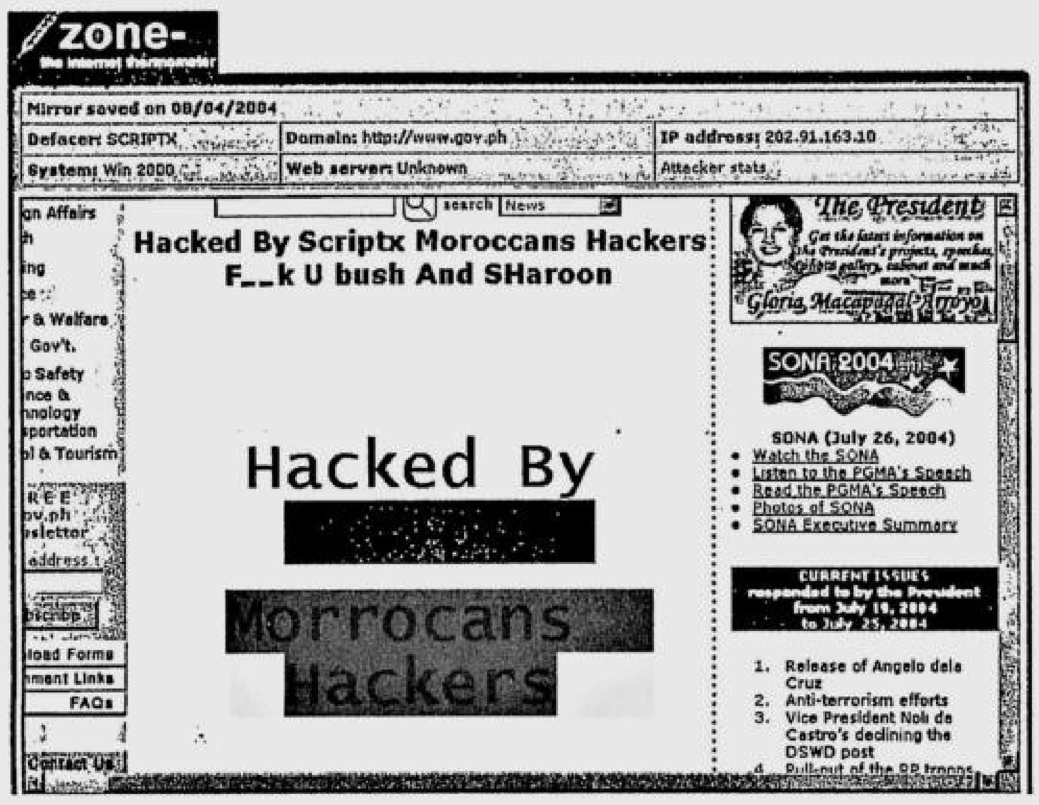
On Saturday, the mtc.gov.ph website was also defaced by a group of hackers called "hellboys." This group was also behind the cyber vandalism of the Environmental Management Bereau website, Zone-H.org digital archives showed.

According to Zone-H.org's list of top attackers, the hacker group "scriptx" (who defaced gov.ph) was also behind numerous website defacements.

The Zone-H.org website revealed that these hackers have vandalized government websites in China, Australia, Brazil, South Korea, and the US.

The scriptx group has vandalized a total of 57 websites as of last week, according to the Zone-H.org website's database.

The attack on the gov.ph website was not the first time. Last month, police were able to identify a local hacker behind attempts to deface the website.



Mirror saved on 08/04/2004
Defacer: SCRIPTX
Domain: http://www.gov.ph
IP address: 202.91.163.10
System: Win 2000
Web server: Unknown
Attacker stats

Hacked By Scriptx Moroccans Hackers
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[redacted]
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Internet facilitates . . .

From page B16

and other forms of child abuse and exploitation.

The Philippines is now on a State Department watch list of Asia Pacific countries where trafficking of women and children is prevalent.

Despite Philippine laws against human trafficking, a recent US State Department report said that the Philippine government did "not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking."

The US State Department study also pointed out that anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts in the Philippines has remained weak.

The Philippine government has enacted a comprehensive anti-trafficking law in May 2003 that imposes harsh penalties against traffickers and clients.

However, there has been no improvement in the government's enforcement efforts, the US State Department report said. The government has investigated cases of trafficking-related offenses but prosecuted only three trafficking cases under the new anti-trafficking law.

Fr. Shay Cullen of the People's Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance (Preda) Foundation, which takes care of abused children and Amerasians, bared an Internet child pornographic operation in Angeles City in Pampanga province last month.

The priest said 59-year-old British national Barry Raymond Edwards who was arrested for pedophile-related activities, was allegedly luring other pedophiles to the Philippines from his home in Angeles City.

Cullen said Edwards was able to escape prosecution as he was allowed to post bail. He is now believed to be in hiding, Cullen said.

He said the British national had been selling child pornographic videos over the Internet. A case had been filed with the local prosecutor in Angeles City.

"We really don't know if these pedophiles are using the Web to distribute child pornography. We really have no idea because nobody is advertising it. But in Angeles City, Pampanga, we believe that they operate live video streaming on the Web and show children being sexually abused," Cullen said.

Viagra maker. . .

From page B16

surveyed believe it was essential to have a doctor's prescription in order to purchase Viagra.

Viagra requires a doctor's prescription to obtain.

Sales of illegal generic versions of Viagra are largely driven through spam, Pfizer said.

The same study found that more than a quarter of men believed erroneously that Pfizer was the source of the unwanted and often annoying e-mail.

Anti-virus and spam vendor Sophos welcomed the pharmaceutical giant's move to fight spammers or people sending unsolicited e-mail.

"Viagra spam is big business as buying medication online negates the need for a sometimes embarrassing visit to the doctors. Indeed, if you have an e-mail account, it's likely you've received Viagra spam—so it's no wonder that Pfizer is cheesed off with spammers hijacking its brand to push bogus drugs," said Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos.

"Pfizer's action may only serve to chip away at the spam mountain, but it's reassuring to computer users when big brands use their weight to slow down the deluge," he added.

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Empowering the barangay using information technology

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

ENRIQUE Urrutia never had any formal education on computers nor did he wish he had. Already pushing 50, the soft-spoken barangay captain from Valenzuela City didn't see any real benefits of using computers, even when Internet shops are popping up everywhere. In their barangay hall, the only computer there became a high-tech typewriter.

All that changed after he underwent a two-week training program under Informatics "Barangay IT" program two years ago. Only then did he, and more than a dozen other barangay officials from Valenzuela, realize how productive and efficient they could become, not to mention the amount of information they learned from the Internet through their "high-tech typewriter."

"The government never really had any money for continuing training for barangay officials. The funding that we get at the barangay level only sufficed for some public works. But with what little we had, some Valenzuela barangay officials got to be trained on desktop productivity," Urrutia said.

With what he learned from Barangay IT, Urrutia, with some college students and a few resident IT workers, began improving Valenzuela's public service. They are currently working on an online barangay clearance system for homeowners, businessmen and residents who want to sign up for the service.

Through the years, Informatics refashioned the training modules for barangays. There are now two modules; Module 1 focuses on computer literacy, basic skills in word processor and spreadsheets, the Internet and e-mail. Module 2 is on advanced word processor and spreadsheet functions, mail merging, report generation and PowerPoint presentation.

According to Urrutia, many of those who took the training were not even aware of the uses of a computer.

"To them it was just a high-tech toy. Probably something they got from watching kids play video games in Internet shops," Urrutia said.

Eventually, these officials—mostly secretaries and chief of staffs of barangay councilors—were able to collect data from their services and efficiently generate reports, thus helping them find out the needs of their constituents.

Urrutia is one of the first 100 public officials who got into the Barangay IT program of the IT training school two years ago. Initially a small one-time project of Informatics in Imus, Cavite, Barangay IT is now being expanded to accommodate training for barangay officials nationwide. That's counting more than 49,000 municipalities and close to 100,000 barangay officials.

In an effort to reach out to the other barangays, Informatics recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the Liga ng mga Barangay, headed by James "Marty" Lim. The partnership entails a co-marketing strategy between the two companies wherein Liga will promote the program while Informatics will offer special discounts to those who will take the training.,

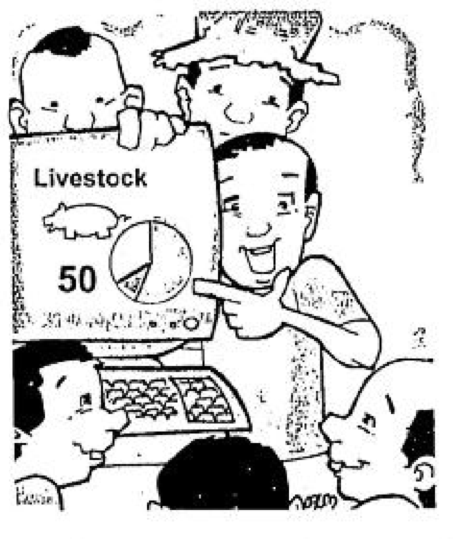
Although the training isn't for free (P11,000 for both modules) Lim, himself an advocate of e-governance in the Philippines, is optimistic that the training will help them achieve their goals of improving the services at the municipal level. He laments that some members of the Sangguniang Kabataan did not even finish their studies and are mostly lounging in the municipal halls and using the computers to play video games.

"We need to go back to the barangays where we could start training our officials and student officers from Sangguniang Kabataan on the use of computers. It's unfortunate to know that very few of our country's barangay public servants are not aware of how useful a computer could be. On the other hand, I'm hopeful that the Barangay IT project will help alleviate that problem," Lim said.

To further his goals, Lim said the Liga ng mga Barangay will have a new project in Valenzuela called Barangay Information Technology Officer for the Youth, or "Bitoy" for short. This project, he said, was partly due to the success of Barangay IT in Valenzuela.

Eric Ticzon, Informatics Barangay IT project head, said the expansion to the other barangays was necessary to help alleviate a barangay's poor service status. It also helps promote technology learning as a means to learn about subjects that help a barangay's economy, as proven by what Urrutia did in Valenzuela.

"When you empower the leaders of the government, they will do their share of empowering their constituents. There should be collaboration between the government and private sector in promoting the use of technology for learning. For us in Informatics, it's a long term project that we're committed to pursue," Ticzon said.



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Internet facilitates spread of child porn, says Unicef

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

A RECENT United Nation Children's Fund (Unicef) study shows that the Internet and innovations in information and communications technology are facilitating the distribution and spread of child pornography worldwide.

The Unicef study acknowledged an earlier US State Department study, which said that the Philippines is now a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor.

"Advances in technology have made it possible for the easier production, reproduction and dissemination of pornographic images of children. The Internet's pornographic sites and chat rooms, digital cameras and cellular phones have facilitated the production and distribution of pornographic images," said Unicef country representative Nicholas Alipui in a statement.

He said that the incidence of child pornography in the Philippines has become alarming.

"Results so far show that child pornography in the Philippines is more widespread than previously thought," Alipui added.

He said that the Philippines is an easy prey for those who produce and use child pornography because of widespread poverty, public tolerance of prostitution and pornography, sex tourism, availability of advanced communication technology, lack of stringent laws against child pornography and inefficient prosecution of perpetrators.

The Unicef executive urged Philippine media to stop "the sexualization and eroticization of children in entertainment media," and called on the public to be vigilant and to report incidents of child pornography

INTERNET/B15

Viagra maker sues online pharmacies to abate spam

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

SAY goodbye to all that "Viagra" spam jamming your e-mail inboxes.

Pfizer Inc., the maker of Viagra, is preparing to sue dozens of online pharmacies illegally hawking the popular anti-impotency drug through unsolicited e-mail or spam.

Viagra (sildenafil citrate) is drug prescribed to aid men experiencing erectile dysfunction.

Pfizer announced on its website that it was working with law enforcement agencies to block sales of illegal, generic versions of the drug.

It also launched a new public awareness advertising campaign and posted online resource to help educate consumers on avoiding illegitimate websites, safely purchasing genuine Viagra online, and minimizing Viagra spam e-mail.

"Pfizer is taking these steps to help raise consumer awareness about the problems posed by illegitimate online pharmacies and to directly address the source of these problems," said Jeff Kindler, executive vice president and general counsel at Pfizer, in a statement.

Pfizer said it was and has never been the source of the Viagra spam e-mail, which often lead users to websites where generic versions of Viagra are sold.

"The tactic can be misleading to consumers who routinely purchase legitimate FDA-approved generic versions of other drugs. Pfizer receives letters from consumers who unknowingly purchase fake Viagra from such websites, and receive drug that doesn't work or makes them ill," Pfizer said.

A Pfizer study showed that 20 percent of the 676 men surveyed purchase erectile dysfunction medications online.

At least two-thirds could not say if the website they were purchasing the drugs from was legitimate. Only 38 percent of the men

VIAGRA/B15

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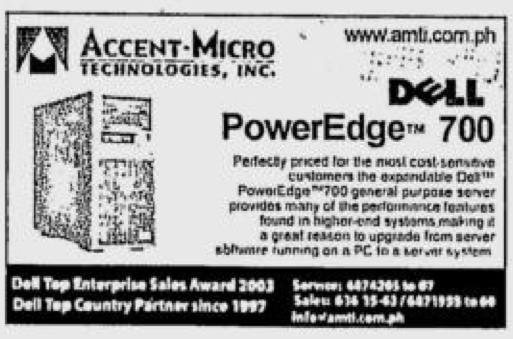

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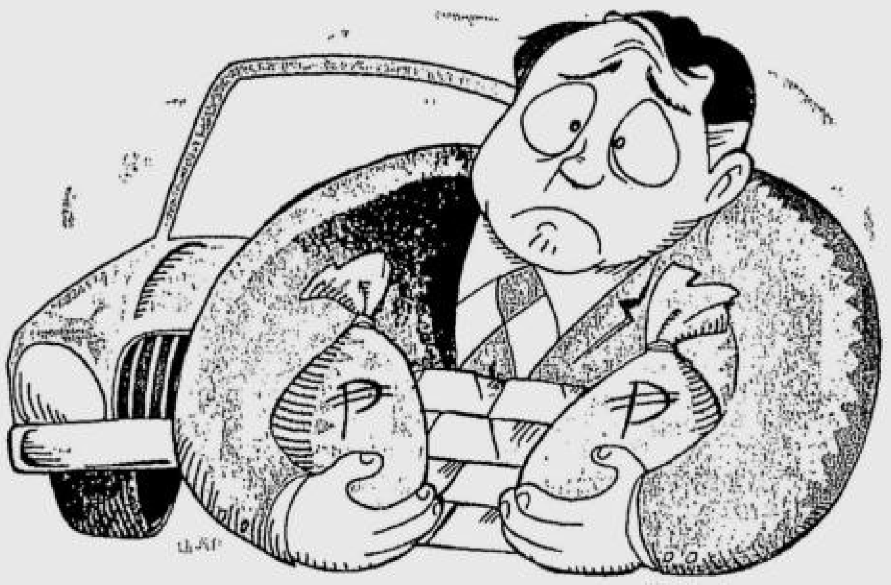
EQUITIES RESEARCH REPORT

'Money can't buy people happiness'

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao



THE RICH are rumored to perpetuate the myth that money can not buy happiness so that the poor would not envy them so much.

Different studies on human behavior since the days of the famous economist Adam Smith, however, show that the myth is true.

Money does not guarantee happiness. Really.

In 1996, visitors to the Pittsburgh International Airport were asked to rank from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important), a list of "things that might be important when it comes to making people happy."

They were then asked to assign percentages as to the importance of each factor in determining overall happiness.

Family life ranked the highest, followed by friends and a satisfying job.

Having a high income received the lowest ranking and rating, according to the study.

A 2000 study of 7,167 students across 41 countries also showed that those who valued money over love were less satisfied about life than those who valued love over money.

These results were discussed in a report entitled, "The Psychology of Happiness," by James Montier of investment firm Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein.

The report said that aside from having fewer wrinkles and a better disposition, there are economic benefits to being happy.

On top of having more friends, a better marriage and a bolstered immune system, people who describe themselves as "happy" are better workers, have more income and display greater creativity.

Montier said that the latest research suggests that happiness is the result of three factors.

The largest contributor is a genetic disposition to being 'happy,' inherited from parents, which accounts for about half of the happiness quotient.

Montier said the genetic disposition measures the "default level" of happiness that an individual enjoys.

"It is the level of happiness that an individual would have in the absence of other factors. Because the set point is generally fixed, it is not something we can alter in order to improve our happiness lot," he said.

Since not many of us are lucky enough to have happy parents to get the genes from, we have to look elsewhere if we want to rise from our grumpy lot.

This leads to the second component of happiness, which are circumstances.

These include demographic factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and geographic factors.

It also covers marital status, job security, health, income and religious affiliations.

"In general, married, well paid, secure, healthy and religious believers are more likely to report themselves as being happy than the rest of us," Montier said.

The Montier study estimated that circumstances would account for 10 percent of the happiness score.

The rest is contributed by "intentional activity," which was defined as actions or practices that people choose to do.

The study broke down intentional activity into three areas.

Behavioral activities include exercising regularly, having sex, being kind to others and spending time socializing.

Cognitive exercises include looking at the bright side and pausing to count blessings.

Volitional activities, meanwhile, include striving for personal goals and devoting effort to meaningful causes.

As the name suggests, humans can alter their activities to increase their happiness.

People who feel depressed, for instance, could take up a physical activity or join a worthy cause. Then they would realize that they feel better about themselves.

The report said that people have a better chance of increasing their happiness scores by changing their activities, than it is to change their genetic make up or circumstances.

This will fall under the category of things that people can change. The wisdom to know that enables them to look at a life with a permanent smile on their faces.

10 WAYS TO IMPROVE HAPPINESS

1. **Don't equate happiness with money.** People adapt to income shifts relatively quickly, the long lasting benefits are essentially zero.
2. **Exercise regularly**. Taking regular exercise generates further energy, and stimulates the mind and the body.
3. **Have sex** (preferably with someone you love). Sex is consistently rated as among the highest generators of happiness. So what are you waiting for?
4. **Devote time and effort to close relationships.** Close relationships require work and effort, but pay vast rewards in terms of happiness.
5. **Pause for reflection, meditate on the good things in life.** Simple reflection on the good aspects of life contributes to happiness.
6. **Seek work that engages your skills, look to enjoy your job.** It makes sense to do something you enjoy. This in turn is likely to allow you to flourish at your job, creating a pleasant feedback loop.
7. **Give your body the sleep it needs.**
8. **Don't pursue happiness for its own sake, enjoy the moment.** Faulty perceptions of what makes you happy, may lead to the wrong pursuits. Additionally, activities may become a means to an end, rather than something to be enjoyed, defeating the purpose in the first place.
9. **Take control of your life, set yourself achievable goals.**
10. **Remember to follow all the rules.**

SOURCE: DRESDNER KLEINWORT WASSERTEIN

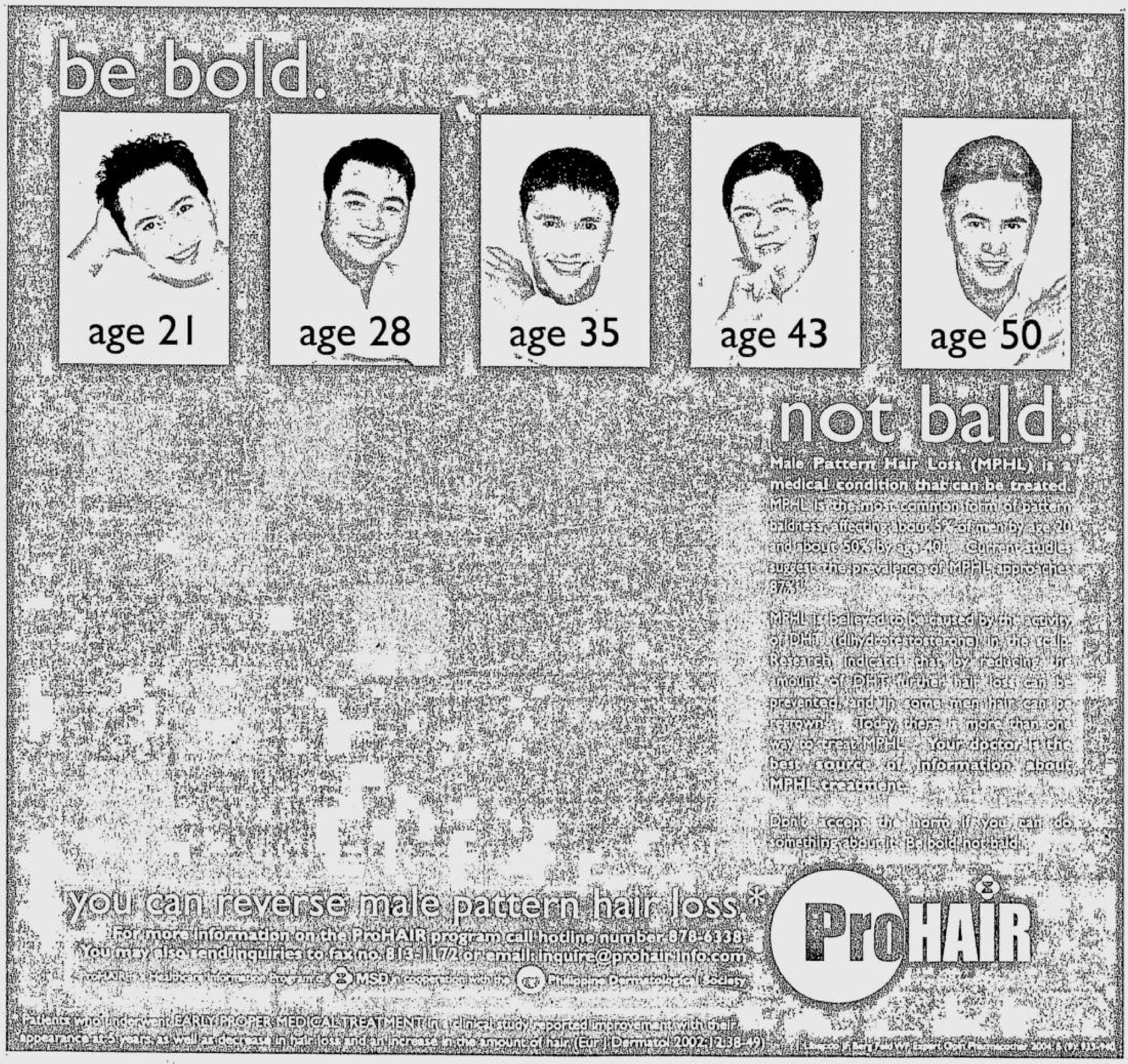
Sending jobs out viable, S&P says

LONDON—Credit profiles among Europe's business services providers are benefiting from the continued trend toward outsourcing, and are supported by low capital intensity and healthy free cash flows, according to a research report published today by Standard & Poor's Ratings Services.

The report, which identifies key industry characteristics and success factors, provides a framework for the analysis of business service companies across the region.

The business services industry encompasses a wide range of niches, with broad segments covering facility services (cleaning, hygiene, food, and security services) and professional services (staffing and advertising agencies, and consulting services). Generally, rated companies in this sector are large diversified industry leaders, with expansionary growth strategies and moderate financial profiles.

"The business services industry enjoys positive credit characteristics, with the prospect of continued growth due to ongoing outsourcing. Furthermore, service providers feature flexible cost bases and low capital intensity that help generate healthy free operating cash flow," said Standard & Poor's credit analyst Alf Stenqvist. *Reuters*



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How effective is your board's audit committee?

(Second of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Celso P. Vivas

AN AUDIT committee's tasks are so exacting and responsibilities so large that commitment, training skills and experiences are required of each of the committee's members.

Wrong decisions by the committee could spell trouble for the company, as proven by how the audit committees handled the three situations discussed in the first part.

In Situation 1, the audit committee approved the 2003 draft financial statements as presented.

Before approving though, certain questions were asked in jest, "Can you tell us what questions we should be asking you?" "How do you call again the accounting principles you follow?"

As to the CFO, he was wrong in his interpretation of the accounting treatment. The transaction involved was a tax-free exchange. And this was an accounting blunder that the audit committee did not discover.

The CFO was not a CPA, though he had been with the company for 35 years and would be retiring soon. Situation 1 is a case of a weak audit committee relying on the lack of proper education, training and relevant expertise of a "CFO."

In Situation 2, after lengthy discussions, the committee approved the external auditor's audit plan—with an earnest request for a small reduction in fees.

'Stupid questions'

The audit engagement partner had to caution his senior auditor when the latter said he was appalled by how much time was frittered away by the directors asking what he described as "stupid questions."

Can you blame the senior auditor? He knows that none of the directors present during the meeting had audit knowledge or background.

Situation 2 is a case of the external auditors reporting to a weak audit committee.

For instance, a strong committee would probably berate the newly appointed external auditors for prematurely raising the issue of audit qualification.

Audit qualifications should be considered only as a last resort. The external auditors were probably just trying to create first impressions, but not in the proper manner.

In Situation 3, the committee, lacking familiarity with internal audit functions, blindly approved the chief internal auditor's request for staff increase, without a comment on the audit findings submitted.

It did not notice any shortcomings in the present internal audit activities. The internal auditor is already 50 years old and only had six months of experience in a mid-sized accounting firm way back in the '70's. In today's more complex business environment, the internal auditor's field report and his audit approaches are already considered outdated or passé.

The focus of the internal audit has changed from the traditional way to a proactive, value-driven and process-oriented approach.

In simple terms, there is now a shift from the "detect and correct" approach to "prevent and monitor" approach.

Modern day internal auditors search for significant, critical areas which, if overlooked, would cause disaster for the company.

Situation 3 features a case of a weak audit committee reviewing the work of an outdated internal auditor.

From these discussions, it is apparent that many AuditCom members are often in the dark as to their roles and what the critical factors are in making the audit committee work.

Urgent call

More often than not, members do not know the nature and scope of accounting principles, auditing procedures and standards, internal control systems, enterprise-wide risk management, how are financial statements prepared, and so on.

From my experience, directors merely rely on their accountants and external auditors in handling difficult accounting matters such as business combinations, accounting for hedges and derivatives, valuation reserves, interest on joint ventures.

Finally, many audit committees may not have fully realized the importance of the internal audit function in their role as an oversight body on the company's operational control systems.

As explained earlier, today's internal auditors still follow the traditional 'fault finding' way of doing their job.

It is high time that audit committees embrace the urgent call for the transformation of the internal audit function into a proactive, value driven approach, and make it an effective pillar, which the committee can depend on.

In conclusion, the audit committee's functions are meant for directors with knowledge, skills and experiences in audit and accounting.

Assign audit committee seats to directors who are adept at auditing and accounting.

A short-term action is to hire a retired audit partner of any of the big accounting firms as an independent director and have him chair the committee.

That retired partner almost surely has expertise in audit as well as thorough knowledge of GAAPs and IASs. He can serve as the backbone of the entire organization on all audit and finance concerns.

The directors, CFO, chief internal auditor, and chief risk officer can look up to him for necessary advice. And because of his long exposure to clients in various industries, he can even give valuable inputs in board meetings and deliberations on issues outside his area of competence.

The long-term solution is to make sure that the rest of the members of the committee have adequate accounting and finance background. Directors must all be "financially literate."

Due to the sensitivity of its functions as well as the heavy responsibility attached to the discharge of such functions, it is imperative for the committee to raise the bar of members' qualifications several notches higher than what the regulations require.

The SEC and BSP can help by issuing relevant circulars.

Finally, the board is ultimately responsible for the oversight of company performance and that oversight responsibility is vested in the audit committee.

Accounting is the language of business and financial reporting is the bedrock of business society.

Critical decisions

Owners, directors, senior management, and all other corporate governance players make important and critical business decisions based on what they expect to be reliable financial data.

The field of accounting and finance is the turf of CPAs and the audit committee assumes the oversight of financial reporting on behalf of the board; thus the need for the committee to review its effectiveness and strengthen its capabilities.

Unless the committee members have relevant skills and experience, it is bound to fail at fulfilling its role as one of the most vital committees that the Board of Directors depends on.

And the critical decision to accept what is fit and proper rests with the individual members of the audit committee.

(The author is a member of the MAP Committee on Corporate Governance. He is the chairman of PICPA National Committee on Corporate Governance and is the founder, vice-chair and CEO of the Corporate Governance Institute of the Philippines (CGIP), PICPA's corporate governance arm. He chairs the AuditCom of a bank and is a member of its Risk Management Committee. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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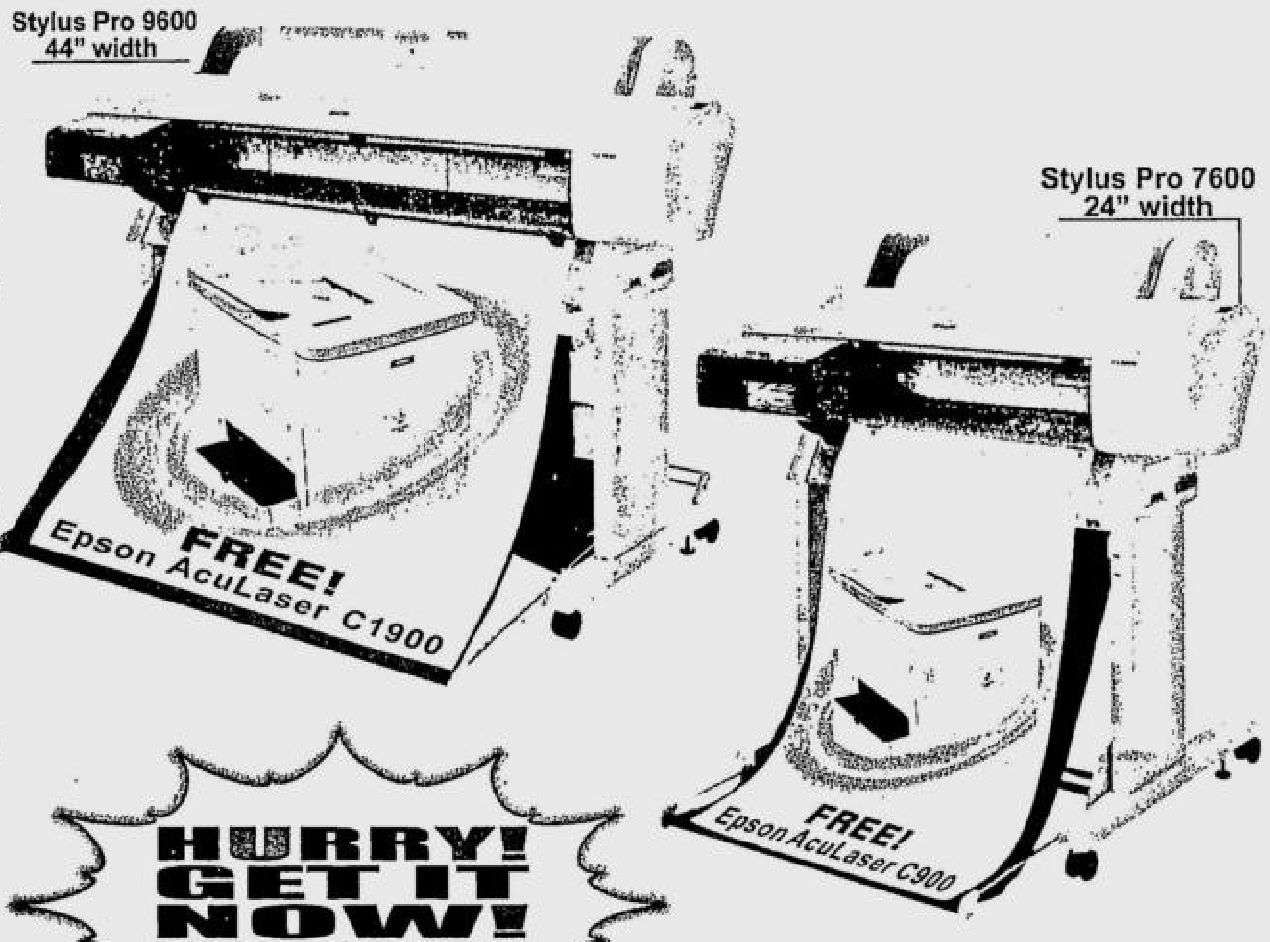

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RP remains good base to start new ventures

THE RELATIVELY low cost of doing business in the Philippines coupled with an affordable and comfortable lifestyle continue to attract foreign businesses to the country, according to an informal survey of expats based at the Oakwood Premier Ayala Center and other executives of various nationalities operating in Makati.

Mike Clancy, chair of the Philippine Business Leader's Forum, which provides reports and insights into the Philippine social and political situation primarily to an expat audience notes: "The Philippines is considered a low-cost environment in which to develop the Asian market."

During the start-up phase, he observes, the base cost of doing business in the country is lower than say, in Hong Kong. At the same time, it is centrally located within easy access of all other Asian cities.

Moreover, where else in Asia can you find dive spots, restaurants and other lifestyle amenities at such reasonable rates, he adds.

This prevailing sentiment about the Philippines is echoed by a number of foreign executives who operate from the serviced offices of Oakwood, a luxury establishment in the heart of Makati. As a complement to the self-contained serviced residences, Oakwood also offers for lease fully furnished offices to business executives.

Loudette Tanjuatco, Oakwood's business center consultant, points out that notwithstanding the Philippines attractions, some adjustment is always required when setting up a new home and a new office anywhere in the world. She cites a report on the expat experience at www.virtual-asia.com stating that it takes an expat up to nine weeks after a relocation to be fully productive in the new environment.

With these adjustments in mind, the staff of Oakwood's serviced offices offers to free the executive—whether he is an expat or a local - from the less pressing details of establishing a new office in unfamiliar surroundings.

They offer fully furnished rooms complete with desks, space for files and equipment, two telephone lines with modem connections and DID lines. Oakwood can likewise look for secretaries and messengers as well as provide briefs on the current political situation courtesy of the Philippine Forum of MCA, the country associate of the Economist Corporate Network.

All these conveniences are fully appreciated by Larry Asera, a recognized pioneer in the area of photovoltaics, the science of converting sunlight into electricity through the use of silicon solar cells.

Based in California, Asera is setting up a 6.67-megawatt solar power plant in Puerto Princesa and hopes to set up more facilities in other parts of the country. He has been able to keep in close touch with his headquarters abroad from the serviced offices and has had the flexibility of expanding his space as his Philippine project takes root.

According to Tanjuatco, clients of the serviced offices fully enjoy this kind of flexibility. For this and other reasons, the secretariat of the Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, for instance, has held office at the Oakwood since 1998.

In addition, the complex is a short walk from most of the top 100 multinational and Philippine corporations also offers under the same roof meeting rooms, videoconferencing facilities, ample parking space just an elevator ride away, facilities and equipment from printers and scanners to mini cassette recorders.

Tanjuatco notes that members of the Oakwood staff are accustomed to dealing with foreigners most of whom are business travelers. They have a standard of proficiency that is at par with international standards and requirements.

Unsurprisingly, the luxury property has one of the highest return-guest ratios in the industry. This means that once a guest stays at the Oakwood, he is very likely to stay there again on his next visit.

According to Tanjuatco, the Philippines, in general, offers the expat a certain "comfort level" that other Asian capitals do not. She agrees with an observation cited by www.virtual-asia.com: "Filipinos readily accept foreign visitors and help them find a second home in this country."

For inquiries on serviced office space at the Oakwood, please call Loudette Tanjuatco at 755-8800.

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MOVEMENTS

Mead Johnson has new GM

DALLAS

MEAD Johnson Nutritionals has announced the appointment of Roger J. Dallas as its new president and general manager.

Dallas took office last May 31. His new role at Mead Johnson involves contributing to the company's overall growth in the Philippines and the Pacific Islands through the development and implementation of product strategies, driving the management team to meet consumer's needs with high quality products and services, and supporting the company's various corporate social responsibility projects, most notably its nationwide milk feeding program.

Dallas takes over Kasper Jakobsen, who is moving on to a new assignment as vice president and general manager of Mead Johnson South Asia.

Prior to his new assignment, Roger was VP for Mead Johnson's US retail sales since 2001. He joined Bristol-Myers Products in 1980 as a sales representative, then progressed through sales roles of increasing responsibility within Bristol-Myers Products. In 1996, when the Consumer Sales Organization was formed, Roger was appointed director of the customer team supporting Wal-Mart.

He also held several positions in sales and marketing in various Mead Johnson affiliates which include: director, Mead Johnson business development group in Evansville, Indiana; and director, national account team Bentonville AR for Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.

Dallas holds a BS Degree in Business Management from Lake Superior University.

PBPD gets accreditation

THE PHILIPPINE Board of Pediatric Dentistry (PBPD) announces its accreditation by the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) and the Board of Dentistry (BD).

Induction of the Diplomates of Pediatric Dentistry and its Board of Examiners was held recently. Present during the event were Antonieta Fortuna-Ibe, Chair PRC; Dr. Rosario Achacoso-Damatac, Chair BD, Dr. Arsenio Donesa, pres. Phil. Dental Assoc.; Dr. Noel Vallesteros, pres. Philippine Pediatric Dental Society, Inc (PPSDI); and Dr. Liza Centeno, Immediate Past-pres. PPDSI. PBPD inductees were Dr. Lourdes Paras-Caparas, Chair; Dr. Carina Mabanta-de los Reyes, secretary; Dr. Ma. Rosario Ramirez-Eala, treas.; Drs. Alegra C. Zita and Ma. Margarita Regudo-Almoro, members; and Dr. Anna Cuevas-Dimanlig. The PBPD verifies to the public that a pediatric dentist has successfully completed both an advanced educa

MOVEMENTS/ B2-5

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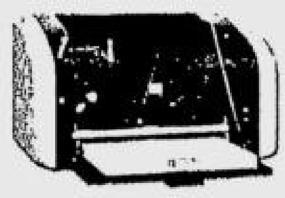

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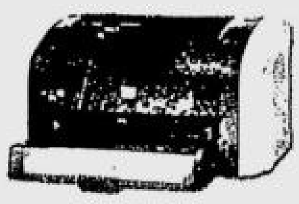

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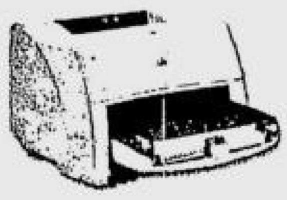

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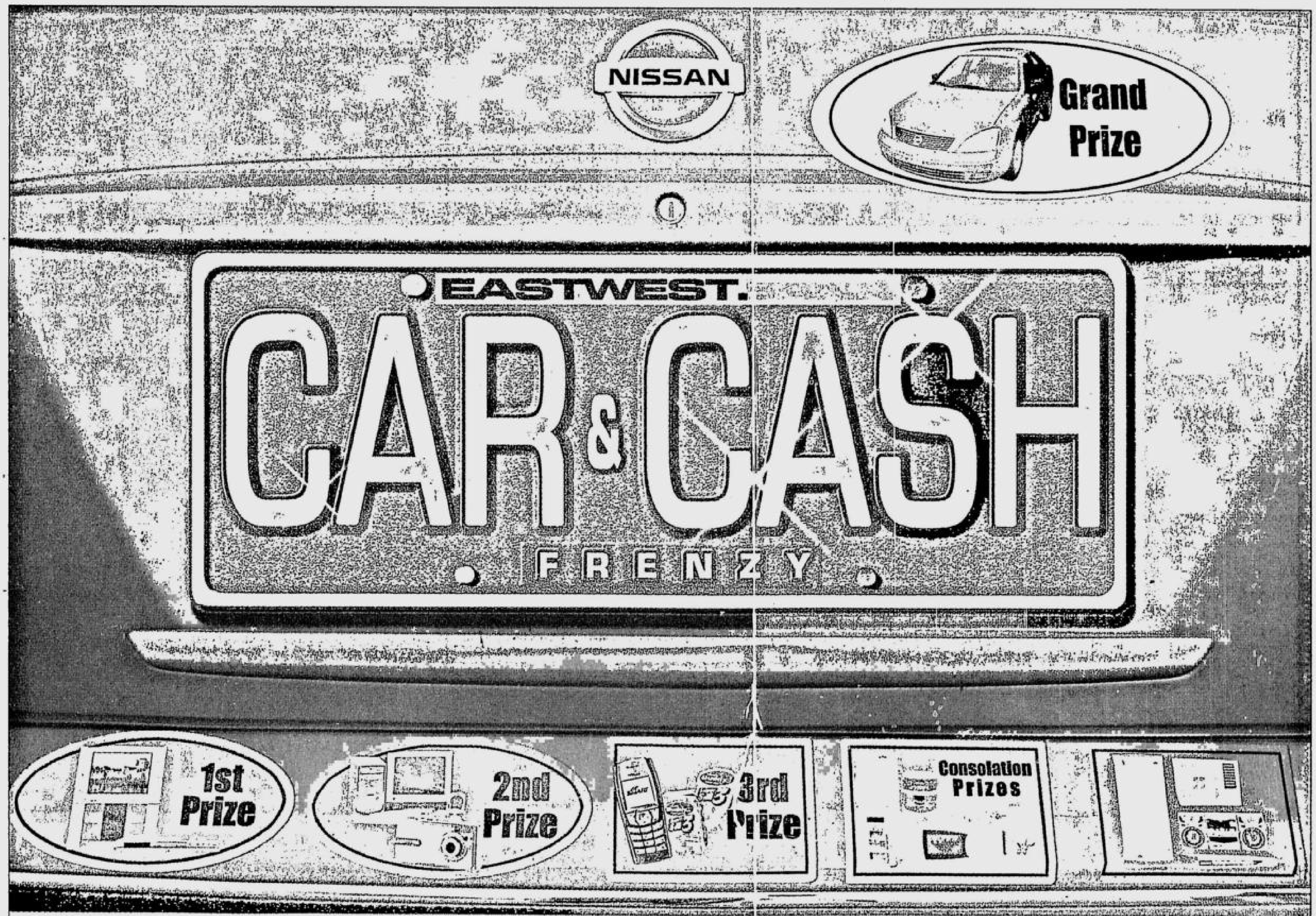

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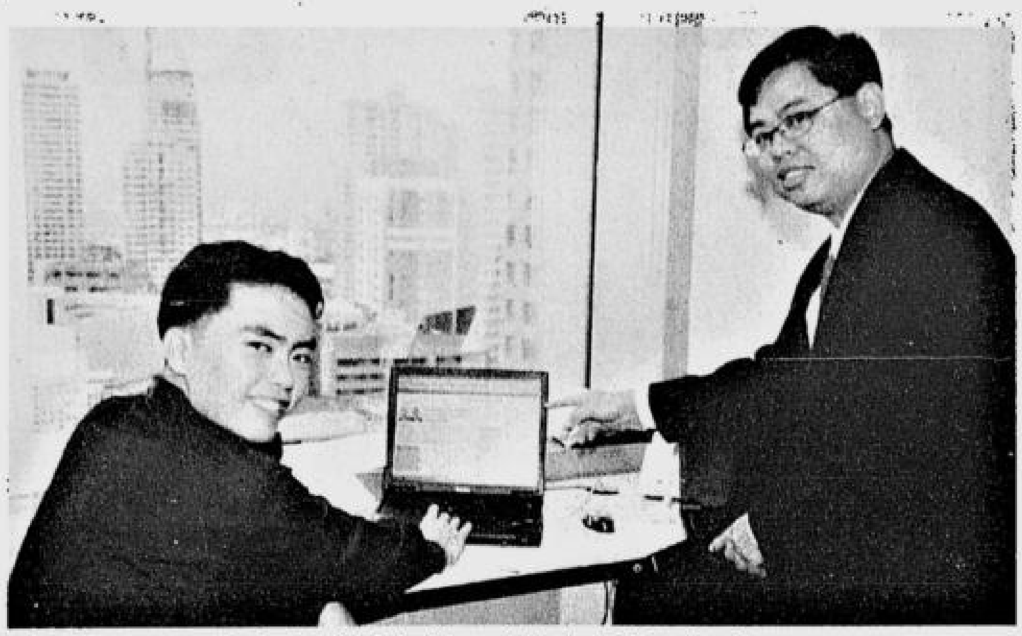


NEW partner Juancho Robles (right) with audit junior Reinier Prudente.

Going after only the best

THREE years ago, Juan Carlos " Juancho" Robles rejoined public accounting firm Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A) after spending a little over a decade in Saipan as audit manager in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) where he raked in commendations for his work against white collar crime and government corruption

Upon Robles' return to the country, local auditing firms scrambled to enlist him, particularly because of his extensive experience in public accounting, government auditing, and internal and forensic audit.

But the Certified Fraud Examiner—one of only 30 in the Philippines—chose to come back to P&A, the Philippine representative of Grant Thornton, a leading worldwide organization of accounting and consulting firms.

"It was really easy to choose P&A because I know how the Firm treats its people fairly," explains Robles.

People like Robles are the kind of candidates that P&A continues to target.

In 1988, when P&A chair & CEO Ben Punongbayan founded the Firm with chair emeritus Joe Araullo, he made it clear to his pioneer employees that recruitment would be the most crucial function of the Human Resources (HR) Division. Fred Damian, Head of HR & Communication says, "Ben was emphatic in saying that we can never aspire to be a major player if we are not able to get skilled people right from the start."

Initially, recruitment seemed particularly daunting for the fledgling Firm. P&A was the underdog among the local auditing firms, a reality that only drove its HR team to work harder in convincing professionals that P&A had the environment and the resources ideal for optimum professional and personal growth.

Relying on the reputation of its two founders and a small group of experienced auditors, P&A welcomed, on its first year, several top accounting graduates (all eager to become pioneers in a new CPA firm) and set a benchmark for subsequent recruitment seasons, when many of them became CPA topnotchers later that year.

These early-year hires enjoyed the privilege of working directly under Ben and Joe themselves, and the exhilaration of handling higher-level assignments at an early age.

P&A's efforts are indeed paying off. It has been getting its fair share of the best candi-

GOING/ B2-5

You can now send proxy forms via electronic mail

By Raul Palabrica

ANOTHER concession to modern technology, in particular, the Internet, was made recently by the Securities and Exchange Commission in the implementation of corporate laws.

Electronic mail is now accepted as a means of submitting proxy forms.

Last year, the SEC allowed video and teleconferencing as modes for the conduct of meetings of boards of directors that some of its members are unable to attend due to distance, conflict of schedule or other justifiable reasons.

Under the Corporation Code, the personal presence of the directors is required in all meetings of the board. They cannot attend or vote by proxy at these meetings.

The rationale behind this requirement is, the directors were elected to their position for their expertise or managerial ability and therefore they should be physically present whenever the board convenes for business. After all, the stockholders placed their trust on the elected director, not on his substitute or proxy.

Board meetings that are conducted through video or teleconference are considered valid if they comply with, among others, the following conditions: the identity of the director who casts his vote or participates in the discussion is shown or mentioned, a video or tape recording of the proceedings is kept on file for future reference and an official transcript of the minutes of the meeting forms part of the corporate records.

E-mailed proxy

In Memorandum Circular No. 4, dated March 17, 2004, the SEC recognized e-mail as one of the means by which a stockholder, who is unable to attend a stockholders' meeting, can appoint a proxy to represent him in matters that require stockholder approval.

Until the SEC issued this circular, the proxy form had to be delivered personally or by post mail to the corporation ahead of the meeting.

Now, the proxy form can be sent by e-mail or through the Internet.

If the e-mailed proxy does not contain a date, the date of dispatch indicated in the e-mail or, if not mailed, its actual date of presentation shall be considered the date of the proxy.

In case more than one proxy is sent by the same stockholder and all are undated, the electronic dates shall become material in determining which proxy shall be honored.

The proxy bearing the latest time of dispatch, as appearing in the e-mail, shall prevail.

If the proxy is not mailed, then the time of its actual presentation to the corporation shall be taken into account; the proxy that is presented last shall be recognized.

Shares allocation

The SEC also reiterated the rules to be followed if the stockholder intends to designate several proxies, namely:

- The number of shares of stock to be represented by each proxy shall be indicated in the proxy form.
- If some of the proxy forms do not indicate the number of shares, the total shares of the stockholder shall be tallied and the balance, if any, shall be allotted to the holder of the proxy form without the number of shares.
- If all are in blank, the stocks shall be distributed equally among the proxies.

In the same circular, the SEC stressed that all common shares of a corporation should be equal in all respects.

Corporations were warned against making multiple voting and non-voting common shares or limiting the maximum number of votes per stockholder regardless of the number of shares they hold.

Foundations

While the SEC liberalized the rule on proxies, it tightened up on the registration of foundations, to minimize the possible misuse of funds donated to these non-stock, non-profit corporations.

In Memorandum Circular No. 3, dated Jan. 20, 2004, the agency defined a foundation as "a non-stock, non-profit corporation with funds established to maintain or aid charitable, religious, educational, athletic, cultural, literary, scientific, social welfare or similar activities primarily through extending grants of endowments."

The listing does not include "professional," "fraternal" and "civic" purposes, which the Corporation Code describes as permissible objectives for the formation of non-stock, non-profit corporations.

Aside from the standard documents required for the registration of non-stock, non-profit corporations, applicants for registration of foundations have to submit a plan of operation executed under oath by its president.

This describes the foundation's mode of operation, source of funds, proposed application of funds and the prospective beneficiaries of its grants or endowments.

The toughest part of the latest requirements is the certificate of bank deposit of not less than P1 million, representing the funds to be used for extending grants or endowments, that should accompany the application for registration.

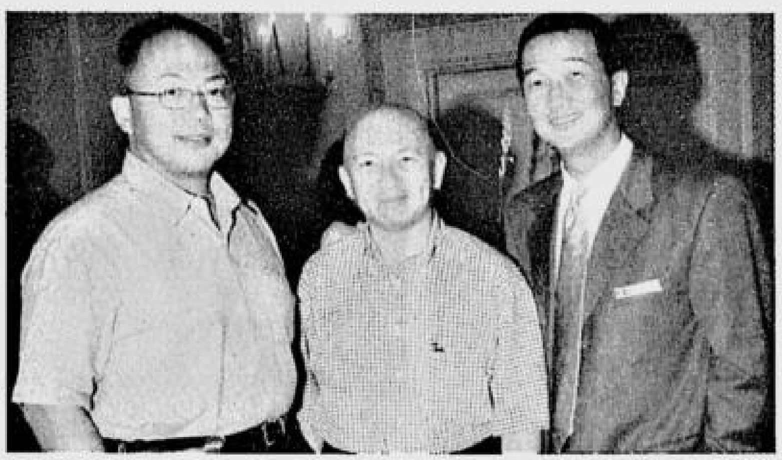
Accountability

To further impress on the officials of the foundation the fiduciary nature of their responsibility, the SEC also requires the foundation's president to submit under oath, in addition to the usual financial statements and reports, a Statement of Funds Application.

The statement should contain detailed information about the sources and amount of funds, the names of beneficiaries and the corresponding amounts of funds granted or endowed to them by the foundation.

However, upon the request of an interested party, the SEC may exempt foundations from compliance with these guidelines for meritorious and justifiable reasons and under such terms and conditions that it may impose.

iBANK president and CEO entertains Wilson Go and Jackie Go, owners of Fabtech Industrial Corp.



iBANK director Greg Yu, Alliance Tuna International vice chair Alvin Dee and iBank SVP WIlliam WHang

Automated cash management to streamline operations

IN THIS modern world interconnected with wired and wireless technology, companies are looking for ways to further improve productivity and efficiencies in their business.

This was probably what the business management sector of iBank (International Exchange Bank) was thinking when they cooked up iSolutions, their latest suite of customized and automated cash management services to help streamline business operations.

In an unprecedented series of launch blitzes mounted everyday for an entire week, iBank orchestrated an afternoon of fun, food and music at Makati Shangri-la, Edsa Shangri-la, The Palms Country Club and at the Westin Philippine Plaza, to showcase iSolutions.

Officers of top corporations and business owners were seen marveling at this latest innovation. And why not, when these solutions promise to empower companies by making operations easier and more efficient for everyone.

RemoteLink, for instance, is a facility that lets you transact and access account information from the convenience of your personal computer. Checkwriter Plus and My Checkwriter, on the other hand, are automated systems for check preparation and disbursement; while Check Instore helps safe-keep and monitor post-dated checks.

"We at iBank also look after the growth needs of our clients so we always try to look for ways to help them streamline their operations as well as maximize earnings for their company. iSolutions is probably the best and the most efficient of its kind," says Gerry Susmerano, iBank senior vice president and head of business management sector.

THE 25TH MANILA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR
& LEARN I.T.
THE 1ST LEARNING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FAIR
Let reading & literacy glitter as MIBF goes silver!
August 11-15, 2004 • 10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M. • WORLD TRADE CENTER METRO MANILA
Financial Center Area, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL EVENTS

Clip this ad for free admission. Good for one (1) person only.

FUNCTION ROOM A

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on Basic Production and Design by Book Development Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
The MIBF - MSA Little Math Wizards 2004 Eliminations, Levels 1 & 2

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Public Forum on "Networking for Survival: A Sharing of Consortial Experiences" by Phil. Asso. of Academic & Research Libraries

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum by UPLSAA

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Forum on "Local and Export Marketing" by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
The Big Leap "Challenge of Publishing Quality Textbook for Pre-school, Elementary, High School & College"by C & E Pub., Inc.

6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Book Launching by St Pauls

Saturday, August 14, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "Parental Involvement in Early Literacy (Family Literacy)" by Philippine Normal University in cooperation with the Reading Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Translation Seminar by Philippine Bible Society

6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
National Book Awards by Manila Critics Circle

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Art Workshop by Art is Kool

FUNCTION ROOM B

Wednesday, August 11, 2004
1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Bayani" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

FUNCTION ROOM B

Thursday, August 12, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Forum on "Prescribed Lifestyle the Way to Live Life" by Medical and Health Librarians Association of the Philippines

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahina" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Film Showing "Pahina" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

4:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Forum on "Printing Books on Demand" by Fuji Xerox

6:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.
Golden Crayon Awards by Phoenix Educational Systems, Inc.

Friday, August 13, 2004
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN
Film Showing "Hiraya Manawari" and "Detek Kids" by ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
Forum on "Creating a World-Class Environment in the Library" by Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Forum on "Authorship and Editorial Management" by Book Development Association of the Philippines

Saturday, August 14, 2004
1:00 P.M - 7:30 P.M.
National Quiz Bee sponsored by Philippine Booksellers Association, Inc.

Sunday, August 15, 2004
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 NN
Book Launch of "Woman, Religion and Spirituality in Asia" by Anvil Publishing, Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
The MIBF - MSA Little Math Wizards 2004 Championship Round, Levels 1 & 2
The Joys of Reading Essay-Writing Contest Awarding Ceremonies

6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.
Book Presentation of "In the Light of Truth" by Stiftung Gralsbotschaft

ACTIVITY AREA 1

Aug 11 & 12, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M.- 3:30 P.M - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
Aug 13, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.- Artistry and Crafts by Museo Pambata
Aug 14, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
3:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Face Painting, Storytelling, Kite Making by Adarna Publishing
Aug 15, 1:00 P.M.- 2:00 P.M. - Storytelling by Museo Pambata
2:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. Artistry and Crafts by Museo Pambata

ACTIVITY AREA 2

Aug 12, 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. - Flower Arrangement by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Candle Making by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
Aug 13, 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Basic Art and Animation Workshop by Mowelfund Film Ins.
4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.- Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
Aug 14, 10:30 A.M. - 12:30P.M - Landscaping Workshop by Cornerstone Garden
1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.- Basic Art and Animation Workshop by Mowelfund Film Ins.
4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Lego Robotics by Felta Multi-Media Inc.
Aug 15, 11:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Reflexology Workshop by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation

ACTIVITY AREA 3

Aug 12, 1:00 P.M.- 3:00 P.M. - Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
Aug 13, 1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Dishgarden and Terrarium Making by Cornerstone Garden
Aug 14, 11:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. - Basic Hair Cutting by Bagong Henerasyon Foundation
Aug 15, 1:00 P.M.- 3:00 P.M. - Balloon Design Workshop by Filstar Distributors Corp.
3:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Storytelling by Alitaptap Storytellers Club

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(FROM left): ADB executive Salman Munir, Metrobank senior manager Virgilio Gerolaga and Metrobank senior executive VP and First Metro Travelex chair Angelito Villanueva

Partnership between bank and a travel expert launched

METROBANK and Travelex recently launched their partnership in remittance and travel services in two signing ceremonies.

The country's largest bank and the world's largest foreign exchange specialist combined forces to provide the best services for its clients in the Philippines and abroad.

To deliver the best remittance services, Metrobank and London-based Travelex sealed the Travelex Money Transfer (TMT) Network Services agreement that appointed Metrobank as Travelex's representative in the country to offer its person to person money transfer services.

The TMT service enables personal customers to transfer money around the world instantly through its worldwide network. In the Philippines, Travelex found a suitable partner in Metrobank with its vast network of branches in the country to facilitate money transfer payments.

"We are delighted to have entered into this agreement with Metrobank. Combining Metrobank's banking expertise and extensive branch network in the Philippines with Travelex's global presence, state of the art systems and internationally recognized brand, will result in a winning combination," said TMT chair Mohit Davar.

The agreement further translates to an improved and better service for Filipinos abroad who send their hard-earned money to their families in the Philippines.

Overseas Filipino workers who will remit through Travelex branches in 50 countries worldwide can be secured knowing that their hard-earned money can be received by their families conveniently and safely through the Metrobank Group's close to 800 branches nationwide.

"With TMT, Filipinos can enjoy a quality but affordable remittance service. The TMT service offered by Metrobank will be cash-based money transfer service. In addition to its speed and reliability, trackable transfers, no bank account needed; payment amount guarantee and loyalty card discounts are the important features of the TMT service," Mohit added.

Senior executive vice president Angelito M. Villanueva affirmed the partnership between Metrobank and Travelex. "As the country's largest bank, we have taken on ourselves the best of the world's financial services to the Philippines, and the best of Filipino banking to the world. With our extensive branch network, we are honored to be able to give Travelex the widest possible reach in the country," he said.

In the same occasion, Travelex formally announced its ownership of 40 percent of the equity of Metrobank subsidiary Thomas Cook Philippines as a result of its acquisition of the world-wide business of Thomas Cook Financial Services, the biggest travel agency network in the world.

With 60 percent of the shares owned by First Metro Investment Corp., Thomas Cook Philippines, will be renamed as First Metro Travelex Inc.

Thomas Cook Philippines, now First Metro Travelex, is the leader in business travel services in the country. It has 6 branches in Metro Manila and Cebu and caters to large multinational and local companies. The partnership with Travelex is set to improve its travel assistance services as Travelex shares its expertise as the leading provider of high-value travel assistance services in the world.

Travelex is the world's largest non-bank provider of commercial foreign exchange services, providing integrated solutions for businesses. The Group is also one of the world's leading providers of outsourced travel money to banks, travel agencies and other financial institutions and the world's oldest issuers of Travellers Cheques.

Metrobank continues to be the country's largest bank with consolidated total resources at P522.39 billion as of March 23, 2004. Total capital stood at P54.32 billion.

TRAVELEX Money Transfer CEO Mohit Davar

Mead Johnson …

From page B2-3

tional program and a voluntary examination process designed to validate the knowledge, application and performance requisite to the delivery of proficient care in pediatric dentistry. Inquiries and application for diplomate exam may be addressed to Dr. Carina Mabanta-de los Reyes, Tel. No. 631-4932.

Going after only the best

From page B2-4

dates. Last November, P&A signed up 11 of the 30 topnotchers, including the top three scorers, and a good number of honor students.

P&A's strategy is simple: its young frontline recruitment team starts building relationships with accounting students early in their academic life and maintains close ties with faculty members and review schools. In addition, P&A welcomes on-the-job trainees all year round.

"Our OJT program benefits both the students and the Firm," says HR manager Rodel Edjan.

"On one hand, the students get exposed to actual audit work before they've even taken the board exams. And on the other hand, we are able to give them a first-hand look at the P&A culture and work environment."

Reinier Prudente worked for P&A's Audit & Assurance Division as an OJT for a month before taking the boards in October last year. When the results came out, the UP Diliman graduate finished with the second highest rating. Soon after, he signed up with P&A as an audit junior.

"The OJT experience was very informative and interesting," says Prudente, whose decision to join P&A was influenced largely by his month-long traineeship. "I was able to get the feel of the audit environment, the nature of the work, and the P&A culture. I felt I would be more at ease working here than anywhere else."

Damian stresses, however, that hiring the most number of top performers is not P&A's lone goal. He explains that the Firm looks not only for academic achievers, but also for candidates with leadership experience or potential. "Leadership skills are important because P&A recruitment is not just a numbers game. We're more interested in inducting these top graduates into the Firm's existing culture and molding them into competent members of the team."

After his recent admission as a partner of P&A, Robles feels even more certain that coming back to the Philippines, and to P&A, had been the right decision:

"I told myself that a reputable firm that cares for its people is the only firm I should be with."

Toni and Guy: A cut above the rest

FIRST, Toni and Guy are real persons.

They are two Italian brothers, surnamed Moscolo, who left their native Italy to open a hairdressing salon in London, and an academy for hairdressers.

And Cherry Tiosejo-Reyes is a young and pretty woman with a flair for the beauty business and a real talent for cutting hair.

Mix the two (or three) together and you get the latest "in" hairdressing salon in Manila—only 17 months old and already bidding fair to be the top in this beauty-obsessed metropolis.

Toni & Guy is located at the posh 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, in a sparkling aluminum and glass setting. Its logo hues of blue and white is a veritable temple to the art of dressing woman's and man's crowning glory.

Cherry is the creative and managing director (and sole Philippine franchisee) of what is actually formally named Essensuals Hairdressing The Next Generation Toni & Guy.

The first Toni & Guy salon dates back to 40 years ago and today there are 150 worldwide.

Essensuals is literally second generation T&G because it was set up in 1997 for Toni's two children, Sacha and Christian Moscolo, who are today its creative director and business/education head, respectively.

This second hairdressing chain (there are currently 60 salons across the UK and other countries) was established to fill a gap in the hairdressing market for high quality hairdressing at a competitive price.

The same T&G quality service, in other words, but less expensive.

Which is what Cherry Reyes says Essensuals T & G offers its clients. "We're not high-end. We're affordable," she declares, "Our haircuts range from P350 to P900. And don't forget, we're giving you the benefit of the expertise of our mother company, Toni & Guy, and all our training with it."

Which brings us to the Toni & Guy Academy. Based in London, with a branch in Singapore and soon in Malaysia, it is described by Cherry as "the Harvard of hairdressing."

All the top hairdressers of the Philippines go there for training. Cherry herself used to go there in the days when she was owner-operator of salons and, when she was accepted as a Essensuals T&G franchisee, where she—and her staff of stylists and haircolorists—had to undergo a strict and stiff extended training.

"Three days into the training, I was calling my husband to tell him I wanted to give up! We thought we were good already, but the faculty, like Simon Cowell of 'American Idol', really told us off when they didn't like our work!"

Actually, Cherry says she got into the beauty business originally as a hobby, because her aunt had a small salon on Katipunan Avenue, near Maryknoll College and Ateneo de Manila University where she went to school.

She turned serious only in 1989 when she started working for a well-known beauty artist and ended up as the owner and hands-on manager of three salons for the next ten years or so. She sold them all in 2002 to concentrate on Essensuals T&G in Manila. Which is where she is now.

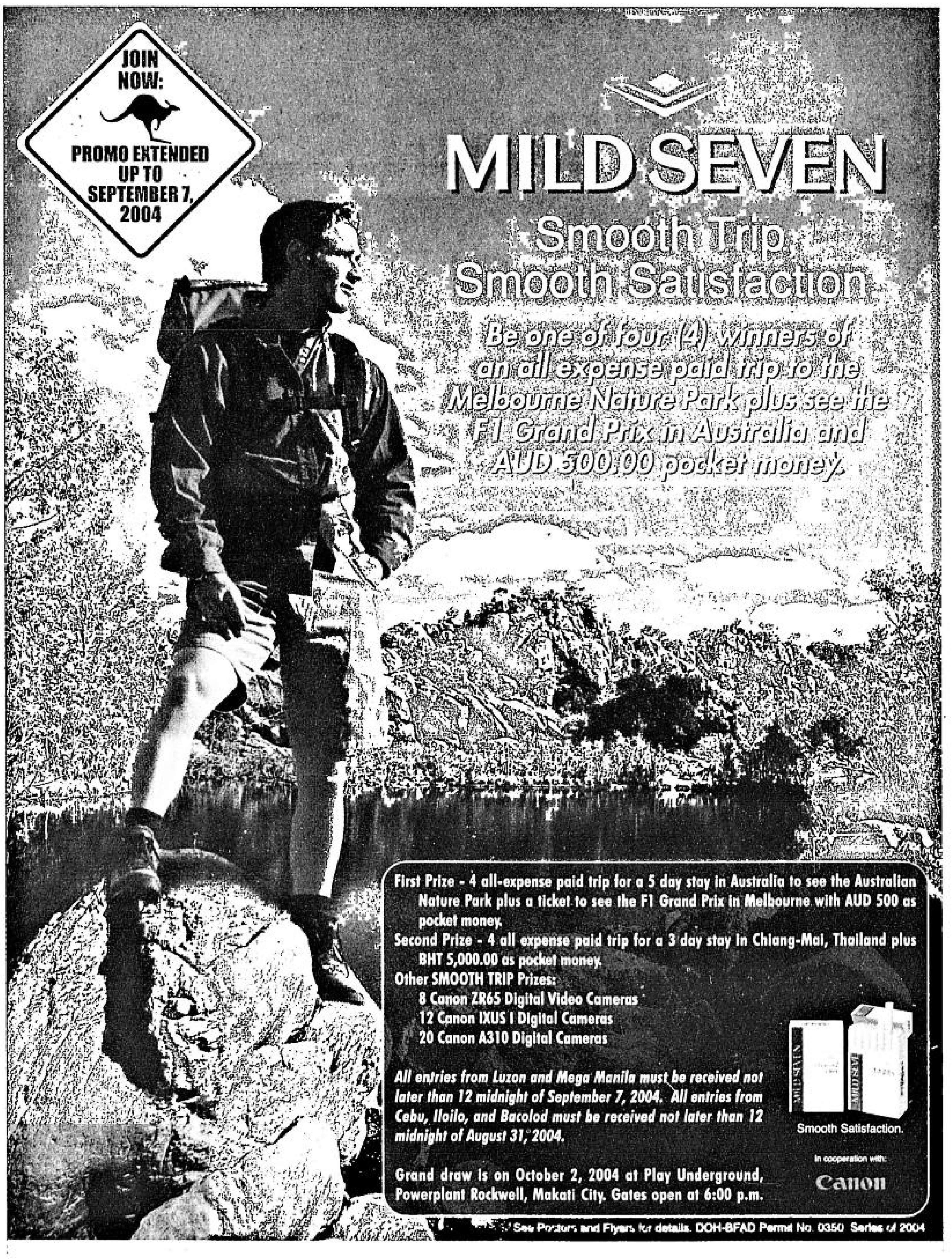
CHERRY Reyes with Eamonn Bourgham, T&G International Director for Education

So how does it feel to be at the top, or very near it?

"It isn't easy to open a salon," Cherry admits. "You have to know the business. I do, of course, as a hairdresser. It so happens that Toni & Guy want their franchisee to be a hairdresser, to be on the floor actually cutting hair. Which is good, because then you get to practice and also you don't have to merely rely on others to do the job.

"Pirating of workers, by the way, is an unfortunate practice here in the Philippines. I myself did not pirate any name stylist or anyone, for that matter. I just looked at the applicant's qualifications to see if they were educated, could speak good English, were good persons—because I knew that, with the Toni & Guy Academy backing me up, I could train them to be really good workers. Right now, I have from 25 to 30 staffers in my 160 square-meter shop." She herself is in the salon four days a week and cutting clients' hair.

Aside from the distinct advantage of having a world-renowned academy behind her shop and lending her prestige, Cherry also feels that keeping communication lines open between her staff and clients is one reason she has such a fulfilled clientele. (Make that happy!) "Our clients are well-educated by now on what we can provide them. They know our stylists are very well trained and they know they will get a good cut when they come here. We also always consult with the client before we cut his or her hair, even if they set no limit. We follow what the client wishes, but if we feel it won't suit her or him, we compromise. And we always explain to them what to expect. That's what we are trained to do!"



JOIN NOW:
PROMO EXTENDED UP TO SEPTEMBER 7, 2004
MILD SEVEN
Smooth Trip Smooth Satisfaction
Be one of four (4) winners of an all expense paid trip to the Melbourne Nature Park plus see the F1 Grand Prix in Australia and AUD 500.00 pocket money.
Smooth Satisfaction.
In cooperation with:
Canon

First Prize - 4 all-expense paid trip for a 5 day stay in Australia to see the Australian Nature Park plus a ticket to see the F1 Grand Prix in Melbourne with AUD 500 as pocket money.

Second Prize - 4 all expense paid trip for a 3 day stay in Chiang-Mai, Thailand plus BHT 5,000.00 as pocket money.

Other SMOOTH TRIP Prizes:
8 Canon ZR65 Digital Video Cameras
12 Canon IXUS I Digital Cameras
20 Canon A310 Digital Cameras

All entries from Luzon and Mega Manila must be received not later than 12 midnight of September 7, 2004. All entries from Cebu, Iloilo, and Bacolod must be received not later than 12 midnight of August 31, 2004.

Grand draw is on October 2, 2004 at Play Underground, Powerplant Rockwell, Makati City. Gates open at 6:00 p.m.

See Posters and Flyers for details. DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0350 Series of 2004

Government Warning :
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

East West Bank pioneers consumer marketing

EAST West Bank prefers to get out of the box when offering its clients infinite possibilities. This year, in celebration of its 10th anniversary, East West Bank bolsters its non-traditional banking activities by partnering with known consumer brands for its Car & Cash Frenzy promo.

Slated to run until Dec. 31, the Car & Cash Frenzy promo highlights the bank's ability to partner with major consumer brands to give the best value proposition for its clients. This time, East West Bank partnered with Nissan Motors, McDonald's, Smart, and Abenson Inc to deliver a unique concept in promoting the Bank.

The promo is open to new and existing depositors of savings or current accounts. Depositors are entitled to a P100 cash voucher for every P30,000 minimum initial deposit balance. The cash voucher can be redeemed for Smart Buddy Prepaid airtime load worth P115 at any Smart Wireless Center nationwide, or used for purchase at any Abenson Inc. outlet.

In addition, the client may also opt to credit the voucher amount to his newly opened savings or current account, or use it to pay bills over-the-counter at any East West Bank Personalized Banking Center. In lieu of the cash voucher, the depositor may also opt to get a P100 McDonald's gift certificate that can be redeemed at any McDonald's outlet.

East West has also prepared bigger surprises for qualified depositors. Aside from the cash voucher, the depositor automatically qualifies for the raffle where a brand new Nissan Sentra 1.3 GX M/T will be given away as the Grand Prize. Other prizes at stake include desktop computers, TV with DVD, digital camera, and other major home appliances from Abenson Inc. Five sets of Smart Buddy Nokia 6610i phonekits also await the lucky winners.

The Car & Cash Frenzy promo is one of East West Bank's creative ways to generate new deposits and entice existing clients to increase their deposits while treating them to kingly perks.

"East West Bank is aggressively at the forefront of change and innovation, from customer-friendly products and services to improved ways of serving customers, making a point to go beyond traditional banking," said Elrey T. Ramos, president and chief executive officer of East West Bank.

There's no stopping the bank in offering more of the good things to its clients. With East West Bank, banking is always something to look forward to.

For inquiries on the promo, call 8-ACCESS (822-2377).

Wellness for Life: Your partner for better quality of life

TODAY'S modern diet leaves our bodies lacking in vital nutrients and makes us more prone to stress and to various types of ailments and health disorders.

Wellness for Life, a refreshing new line of dietary supplements from the United States, is now available in the country to supply our bodies' nutritional requirements and help us face each day with renewed vigor and energy.

Wellness for Life is everyone's ideal dietary partner. It has a wide array of nutritional supplements to ensure that our quality of life doesn't suffer due to the demands of work, stress, pollution, and other factors that are otherwise hazardous to our health. Wellness Calcium Carbonate is not only ideal for women of all ages, but also for men with history of osteoporosis. It comes in 600-mg tablets in bottles of 60 and provides a reliable source of calcium to substantially reduce the risk of osteoporosis, and to maintain healthy teeth and bones.

This and other Wellness for Life dietary supplements are now available at Robinson's Supermarket branches in Ermita and Galleria, ACA Video Stores, PhilCy Pharmacy, Vaxine's Trading in BF Resort, Las Piñas, Big C Pharmacy in Better Living Paranaque, Pacific Pharmaceutical at Quezon Boulevard Extension, Quezon City, and at AMA E-Stores in Panay Avenue and Project 8 in Quezon City. It will also be available in Rustan's Supermarkets, Watson's outlets, Mercury Drug branches, Emilene's Pharmacy and Health & Beyond branches in Metro Manila soon.

Wellness for Life International Inc is a member of the AMA Group of companies with office at 59 Panay Avenue, Quezon City. For more information, log on to www.wellness.com.ph or call 373-3901 to 08 local 8277.

EXCELLENT TASTE!
International Food and Beverage Exposition 2004 exhibitor Krones won the Best Booth Award' in the recently concluded event for the second straight year. Pictured during the awarding are (from left) project director Mayose Bautista, Time Foundation director Rodulfo L. Tablante and president Cesar Lim, Krones director Jorg Thalmann, Fairs & More Inc's Elaine Gatchalian and Uwe Janssen and Alberto Diego of Krones. The organizers are already accepting bookings for the 7th International Food & Beverage Exposition and are offering volume and early bird discounts. Call 687-0654, 845-1324 or log on to www.foodandbeverageexpo.com.

PALAU MICRONESIA STARTS PHILIPPINE FLIGHTS

Alan Seid, president of Palau Micronesia Air, recently announced the airline's forthcoming regular service to Manila. In preparation for the start of its operations in the country, the airline recently appointed Asia-Pacific Chartering Philippines Inc (APC) as its local general sales agent who will be responsible for marketing the airline's services to local travelers and handling the day-to-day operations of the airline. Palau Micronesia Air will Manila to Koror on Tuesdays leaving Manila at 9 a.m. and on Sundays leaving Manila at 2:10 p.m. Shown is Seid (right) signing the contract appointing APC as the airline's GSA represented by lawyer Alfonso Cruz (left), APC legal counsel, and Catalino C. Bondoc, APC managing director. Additional information on the airline and its attractive tour packages may be obtained from travel agencies or through APC at 854-1628, 854-1629, or telefax 854-1630.

COMPLETE RANGE OF CUMMINS AT PHILCONSTRUCT '04

Cummins Sales & Service Philippines Inc will showcase and demonstrate its entire product range that includes power generators, switch gears, engines, parts, filtration and lubricants at Philconstruct '04-14th Philippine International Construction Equipment and Building Materials Exhibition to be held from Nov. 18 to 21 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. The exhibit and technology forum organized by the Philippine Constructors Association has attracted over 250 booths from some of the leading local suppliers and manufacturers. Shown during the contract signing (seated, from left) are Sammy Lazo, PCA secretary, Emilio Tumbocon, PCA national president and Max Montero, sales and marketing of Cummins Philippines. This was witnessed by (standing left) Willy Suaberon, product manager, Fleet GUA, and Leonardo Ulanday, after-sales manager of Cummins. For more information about Philconstruct '04 call Global-Link at 887-1304 or 750-8588, fax 887-1305 or 750-8585, or e-mail jing@globallinkph.com and look for Jing Lagandaon or Mars Rivera.

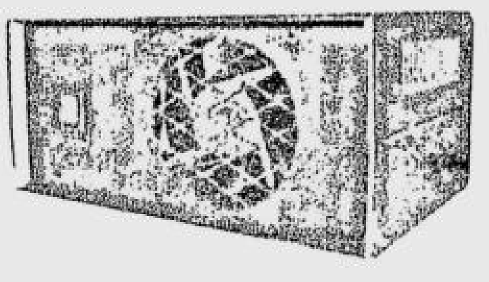
PHILCONSTRU
200

SHEMBERG SIGNS IN FOR ASIAFOOD EXPO
Shemberg Corp, producer of world-class Carrageenan in the global market, recently signed an agreement for joining AsiaFood Expo 2004, the 13th International Exposition on Food Processing, Packaging and Handling Machinery, Equipment and Technology at its main office in Cebu. Sealing the agreement with a handshake were Benson Dakay, chief executive officer of Shemberg Corp and Annie Bersaluna, trade promotions director, Trade Information Marketing & Exhibitions Inc, organizer of AsiaFood Expo. Witnessing the agreement were Gerrymie Leoncio, marketing executive of Shemberg Marketing Corp and Muriel Estrada, trade promotions officer of TIME Inc. Carrageenan is widely used for food applications.

Enchanted Kingdom

ENCHANTED KINGDOM AT WOFEX
Newly elected Senator Mar 'Mr. Palengke' Roxas welcomes Enchanted Kingdom's Wizard and Princess Victoria to the World Food Expo 2004 at the World Trade Center. With him are (from left) EK graphic artist Patrick Regalado, food services section head Olga Gonzales and Abbey Lucas, manager for corporate communications.

ProductFILES



Non-chemical germ, odor killers

THE TRADITIONAL way to remove any foul smell inside your car or room is by using consumable chemicals with artificial scents. However, aerosol sprays, evaporative oils, chemical synthetic fragrances and extracts are dangerous to your car's aircon system. Not only do you have to buy them monthly, they are also hazardous to humans and pets as these chemicals are absorbed through the lungs and the blood stream.

The modern and cost-effective way of removing odors from your car and room is by the use of air ozonators. Not to be confused with generic ionizers, Electromex Air Ozone Generators use ozone (O3) gasses that kill odor-causing germs and bacteria. Thus, no germ, no smell. Ozonators kill airborne viruses such as influenza, SARS, TB, asthma and other diseases.

Electromex ozonators are also safe for humans and pets. They can be plugged in your car's 12-volt cigarette lighter or any 220-volt wall outlet. About half the size of a shoebox, this device can also be used in bedrooms, kitchens, offices, bathrooms or bodegas. These ozonators are maintenance-free and do not need filters or expensive electric needles to be periodically replaced as with the generic ionizers.

The company also builds heavy duty commercial and industrial ozonators for hotels, hospitals, trash rooms, pet shops, call centers, schools, theaters, newly painted rooms, public toilets, gyms, sewers, septic tanks, kitchens, grease traps, food courts, bars, restaurants, and malls. Each Electromex ozonator has a 1-year warranty with a money back guarantee. For a free demo and delivery in Metro Manila, call Electromex Inc at 531-6782 or 535-9069.

SUV rims

SILVERWIND, one of the country's prestigious names in aftermarket designer wheels, has introduced new tuner magwheels for Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs). Shown is the OZ Racing design magwheels available in size 15" to 16" diameters.

The OZ Racing was designed to meet the growing demand for quality aftermarket accessories and have been subjected to stringent quality testing. Silverwind's line up of tuner wheels was also designed to improve the handling and performance of factory spec sedans. Silverwind designer wheels fit most popular Japanese SUVs and pick-ups, and are available in major car accessory shops nationwide. For inquiries on how to improve the aesthetics of your ride, call 742-8832, 742-8834, and 410-0402.

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

AYALA PLANS EXECS PAY SEC A VISIT
Executives of Ayala Plans Inc, one the leading pre-need companies in the country, recently made a courtesy call on the top officials of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). At the office of the SEC Chair were (from left) Larry L. Abaño Jr, Ayala Plans business director; Emilio S. de Quiros Jr, Ayala Plans president; SEC Chair Lilia R. Bautista; director Emilio B. Aquino of the SEC non-traditional securities and instruments department; and lawyer Voltaire P. Agas, Ayala Plans associate director and compliance officer. Ayala Plans boasts of being one of the companies that are fully compliant with SEC reserve requirements. Ayala Plans is a subsidiary of the Bank of the Philippine Islands.

Staying strong despite dietary restrictions

Do you have any disease condition that requires dietary restrictions, as advised by your doctor? Are you taking care of a loved one with feeding difficulties? Or maybe you do not have time for a healthy meal? Any of these conditions can put one at risk of developing malnutrition without knowing it.

Your body needs a certain amount of nutrients to sustain its normal functioning.[1] Essential nutrients are usually derived from eating a well-balanced diet: less fat and sugar, some protein-rich foods, more vegetables and fruits and lots of starches and grains. Each food group provides specific nutrients to meet the body's nutritional demands.

What happens when food intake fails to meet the body's nutritional requirements?

You may suffer from malnutrition.[2] Your body cannot function normally because it does not have enough energy and essential molecules such as amino acids, fatty acids, vitamins and minerals to maintain its activities. You may experience weakness, dizziness, weight loss and susceptibility to infection. Vitamin and mineral deficiency syndromes can also result. In severe cases, this can lead to mental or physical disability, illness and possibly, death.

The effects of malnutrition are more pronounced in hospitalized patients. According to **Dr Jonathan Asprer**, a colorectal surgeon and a metabolic and nutrition support specialist, malnutrition can aggravate underlying disease conditions and increase the risk of complications such as infections and impaired wound healing. It can also impair muscle function and strength. Overall, malnourished patients suffer from more complications and have greater risk of death.

> ***People with special dietary needs or restrictions can stay strong. Nutrition support can help them meet their nutrient requirements to prevent malnutrition.***

Besides hospitalized patients, who are at risk of developing malnutrition?

Generally, people with special dietary needs are at risk. **Infants** and **children** have higher risk because of increased nutritional requirements.[3] **Injury** and **illness** also increase the demand for energy and essential nutrients.

The **elderly** and **people with chronic diseases** (e.g., diabetes and high cholesterol) have dietary restrictions. Feeding is also a big problem because they may be choosy and may refuse to eat. In effect, they do not get enough nutrients from food and they usually suffer from malnutrition. The same is true for people who lead very **stressful lives**. They tend to skip meals because of their busy schedule.

Patients who have **gastrointestinal problems** (especially surgical cases), **liver and kidney ailments** have malabsorption symptoms and are prone to develop vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

What can be done when food is not enough to prevent malnutrition?

With the growing awareness of the effects of malnutrition, Dr Asprer assures that physicians and allied health personnel now have a better understanding of the importance of identifying patients at risk and doing proactive intervention before malnutrition sets in. Dr Asprer explained that early in the course of the disease, there is a "window of opportunity" to institute appropriate corrective measures to prevent malnutrition before it results to a more serious problem.

Providing nutrition support to high-risk individuals can increase body weight and prolong survival. It improves immune function and muscle bulk, resulting to better muscle function, strength and functional independence.[3]

What is nutrition support?

Nutrition support provides essential nutrients to the body by special means other than dietary foods. Oral nutrition support is commercially available. The formulations differ in nutritional profile, palatability, acceptability and cost.[4] They can be given as a supplement or as a meal replacement.

What is the difference between a supplement and a meal replacement?

Supplements provide calories and proteins but lack the other essential nutrients.[4] They cannot be used as sole nutritional sources. They are usually taken 1 to 2 glasses a day. On the other hand, meal replacement preparations contain all the essential nutrients needed by the body.[5] They are given as 2 to 3 glasses per meal. Thus, a meal replacement can replace a well-balanced diet because it provides all the necessary nutrients in a meal. However, nutrition support preparations should not replace food intake for people who can still eat. Instead, these preparations should be given to increase the dietary nutrient intake when food sources are not enough because of special dietary needs.

Health and special dietary needs

People with special dietary needs or restrictions are at risk of developing malnutrition. Nonetheless, they can stay strong by eating a well-balanced diet. In case food intake cannot meet all their nutrient requirements, nutrition support can be given. This should be done with the guidance of health practitioners who recognize the value of nutrition support in people at risk of developing malnutrition.

__Dr Jonathan Asprer__ is the president of the Philippine Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (PhilSPEN). The society will hold its 1st Annual Convention on Sept 21 to 22, 2004 at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel with the theme "Issues and Updates in Nutrition Support: A Multidisciplinary Approach."

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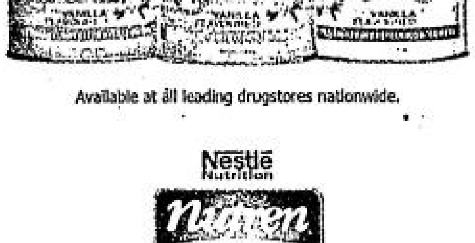

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[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food & Sci & Nutr. 42:353, 2002 [2] Hector A. Cancer Res 1994:54(5):1969-1975.

Brand your products, connect with customers

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co
Contributor, UP ISSI

THANKS or no thanks to globalization and the Internet, the concept of competition has been enlarged for any businessman.

They no longer just compete with the shop around the corner, the next barangay or the next sitio.

They have to reckon with competition posed by businesses in Laguna, Cebu, Davao, Hong Kong, China, the United States ... virtually the whole world.

So, how does a small business survive in a market of increasing size and complexity?

How does it hold its own against so many other shops and producers all angling tooth and nail for customer approval?

The answer may be incredibly simple: "Be true to yourself!"

This injunction implies having, knowing, and nurturing your "personal identity."

Building brands

By creating a brand and building your business around it, you develop the identity with which to connect to customers.

The brand is not simply a name—it is the bond between the seller and the customer.

It delivers a message from one to the other: "Trust us. Trust our company, our leaders, our people, our products."

In a market arena that confounds with so many product choices, a distinct brand can stand out in the crowd and facilitate the decision-making process for the buyer.

Your brand makes an implicit promise to your customers.

It is a promise that your product will deliver a distinct service, value, level of satisfaction, or sense of prestige.

Many features of a business can easily be copied by a competitor, but a highly-reputable brand cannot.

Of course, it is one thing making a promise and another thing being believed that you would deliver on your word.

Between making the promise and earning customer trust is a whole process that entails hard work involving all people making up the company.

It is known as brand development.

William Aruda of Business Resources Center suggests three steps to build a personal brand.

1. Identify your brand—What do you promise your customers in terms of value?

What distinguishes you from the other manufacturers, other shops?

What will compel your customers to prefer your products? This involves documenting your vision, purpose, values and passions.

Be clear about the goal of your business, your target market.

Understand your competitors.

2. Determine how to communicate your brand—Identify communication tools you will use to reach your public and inform them of your brand.

This will include packaging, promoting, advertising, public relations.

Document your message and ensure that it is included in all your communications.

Develop a communications plan that will keep you constantly visible to your public.

3. Manage your brand environment—The brand environment refers to your office, your product outlets, your customer service organization, your website.

Be sure all these communicate a consistent brand message. Build and nurture your professional network and ensure that all members understand your message.

Establish partnerships to extend your brand.

You might think you have to be a Coke, a Magnolia, a Bench or Nike to be able to connect to customers in such a special way.

Not necessarily!

ARTE Cana's upscale Julianne collection

Ng Khai

Take it from Wilson Ng whose Esprint and Ng Khai brands have won large chunks of the computer software and hardware market in Visayas and Mindanao.

When he and his team were defining their brand, they determined that they wanted to sell business solutions rather than machines.

They wanted to make sure customers get their money's worth, that products translate into greater productivity for customers.

Most companies, Wilson thinks, sell machines and care little how they are used.

"We care," he asserts. "We have developed our brand to communicate the message we integrate things better."

A lot of time and effort were invested into brand building, he admits.

Not only do they work hard to come up with quality and problem-responsive software, for example.

They go out of their way to address issues which may not be covered by standard warranties: they provide training and extend consulting and tech support to ensure satisfaction.

Their brochures, catalogs and website proudly announce their business philosophy: "Translating technology into business strength."

"Five years ago, people couldn't spell Ng Khai. Now, not only can they spell it, they also know it is a reliable IT firm."

U2M

A local bag-making company has its own branding story to tell.

Gigi Chua used to produce bags for the mass markets, which she sold in Divisoria, then in ShoeMart and Robinsons.

The bags were branded, but there was no serious attempt to build up and promote the brands. For all these minimal efforts, she enjoyed fairly good sales, lulling her into complacency.

The influx of cheap products from China burst her bubble.

Her answer to the competition: branding, preceded by product development and market niching.

She engaged the services of professional designers and a marketing consultant.

U2M
U2M
U2M
U2M

BAGMAKER uses a celebrity endorser to develop "lifestyle bags."

Targeting her market to be the A and B crowd, she began to produce better crafted and designed bags.

The superior workmanship begins with material selection, Gigi says.

They use polyester of A1 quality—nothing less. The rest of the materials are imported, too.

She and her marketing staff began boning up on their target buyers.

Who are they? What do they do? Where do they go when they get out of the house? What are their needs? their interests? their aspirations?

All these gave birth to the U2M brand now being marketed as "lifestyle bags" for the active and the upwardly mobile.

They have planned their moves: They will create brand identification through a celebrity endorser.

U2M posters are now ubiquitously and strategically posted in outlets.

Next steps will be more exposure on television and print media.

Julienne

Buyers are willing to pay more for the high quality, performance, and sense of prestige communicated by a brand.

Frances Babaran of Arte Caña, a furniture company in Quezon City, learned this when she introduced a new collection for the high-end market, called the Julianne collection.

The collection made use of Filipino basketry, said to be unparalleled in the world.

Indigenous materials (bamboo, rattan and abaca), indigenous skills, combined with structural ability that will survive generations of use.

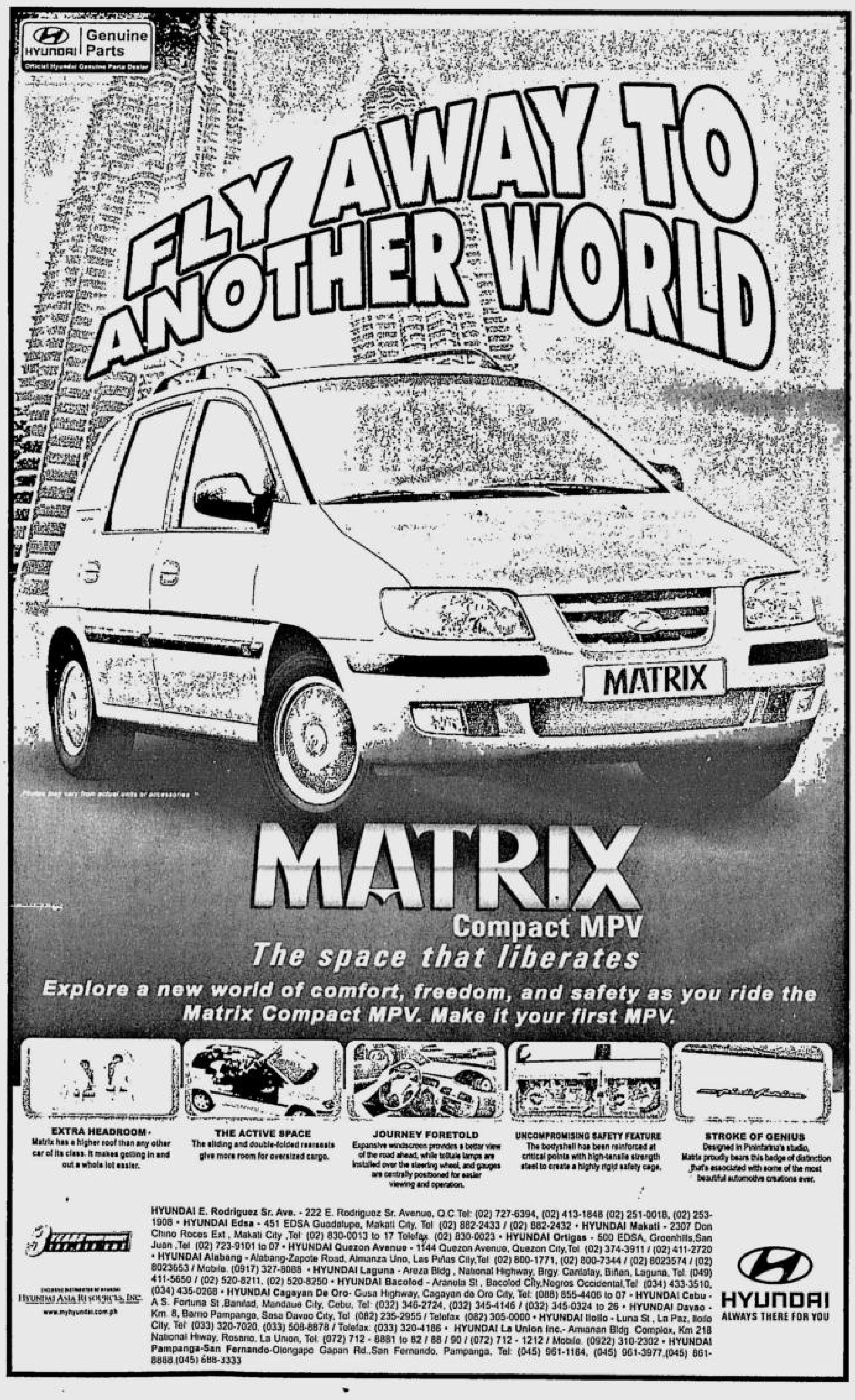
All these, they tried to communicate through the Julianne brand.

Recently, they put up a website, www.juliannecollection.com.

The collection was received very well in a number of international and local tradeshows.

The buyers were willing to pay a good price for Julienne furniture. It is now an Arte Cana mainstay.

(Check out upcoming seminars of the UP ISSI: Start Your Own Business, Creative Selling, Managing the Cooperative, Improving Your Business. Call up 928-7076 to 79 or e-mail training.issi@up.edu.ph)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Car manufacturers get help to build eye-catching cars

DETROIT—Think the head-turning, low-slung Chrysler Crossfire sports car or the curvy, retro-style Chevrolet SSR pickup are built by Detroit automakers? Think again.

Mass market automakers, to compete in a crowded arena, increasingly are turning to small "coachbuilders" or engineering firms for help with distinctive low-volume vehicles that can strengthen a brand's image far beyond their sales numbers.

Major car companies are geared to build upwards of 100,000 of a particular model annually.

Adding a vehicle such as a sports car, which sells in much smaller numbers, to an assembly line can be costly and severely disrupt the production process, executives said.

"We have to break some manufacturing rules to get some of these cool (design) proportions to appear," Larry Achram, vice president of virtual engineering on the Chrysler Crossfire, told Reuters.

"If it's a niche vehicle, and you don't have to build it in your own house, it's much less expensive."

Coachbuilders—a term left over from the horse-drawn carriage makers of a century ago—are common all over Europe particularly for building a one-off show car.

But industry officials see an opportunity for small companies to take a greater role in building production cars in North America, despite the overcapacity in the auto industry created by underutilized plants.

Coachbuilders are able to design, engineer or build a vehicle in half the time of a mass-market company, saving hundreds of millions of dollars, and absorbing much of the risk associated with any new car or truck launch, executives said.

Car designs, like fashion, appeal to the emotions, and automakers must strike quickly with a hit show vehicle before trends change.

"These things age. The ability to be very agile and fast is the key to success," said Mark Reuss, executive director of General Motors Corp.'s performance division.

Ground-breaking

Investment by the niche manufacturers in assembly plants and expensive tooling machinery frees up capital for automakers to invest in future development of cars and trucks.

"It gives (car companies) opportunities to take things off the balance sheet, because all the tools are taken on by suppliers," said Tim Olind, chief operating officer of Karmann USA, a unit of Germany's Wilhelm Karmann GmbH.

Karmann, which builds the Crossfire as well as the Audi A4 and Mercedes CLK convertibles in Germany, broke ground in July for a 144,000 square-foot facility in Plymouth, Michigan, to engineer and eventually build cars, Olind said.

One of the first cars the facility will work on will be GM's Pontiac G6 convertible.

The first mass-market retractable hardtop car to be built in North America in years, it goes into production in 2005.

With the car market fragmenting and consumers demanding more choices, the number of nameplates, or individual vehicles, in the United States has grown well past 300, from about 250 four years ago.

The average sales volume per nameplate, excluding pickup trucks, has dropped to around 40,000, from more than 100,000 15 years ago.

That creates opportunities for some specialists.

Canadian auto parts company Magna International Inc., which also builds the BMW AG X3 sport utility vehicle and DaimlerChrysler AG's Jeep Liberty SUV at its Magna Steyr plant in Austria, has said it could add an assembly plant in North America.

Magna would consider building a new facility or taking over an existing assembly plant from a down-sizing automaker, a spokesperson said.

Hot concept

The Chevrolet SSR, a pickup/roadster crossover, would be just another show car without ASC Inc., which changed its name from American Sunroof Company to American Specialty Cars earlier this year as the engineering and design company expanded the scope of its work.

The SSR was a big hit when it was unveiled as a concept at the Detroit auto show in 2000, but GM had difficulty figuring out how to build the low-volume truck profitably.

"The SSR was named dead in the water in GM internally, from a financial standpoint," said Jeff Steiner, ASC executive vice president and chief marketing officer.

ASC's solution was to build a plant in Lansing, Michigan, to assemble 42 major SSR subcomponents, including the instrument panel and retractable roof.

ASC cut costs by using some obsolete equipment, a less-sophisticated production line, and more manual labor than an average high-tech assembly plant.

Virtually the entire SSR passes through the ASC plant before it is shipped nearly five miles to a previously underutilized GM plant for final assembly.

Both the SSR and the Crossfire are making profits for the carmakers, executives said.

"We wouldn't have gotten the car if we had not done it that way," GM's Reuss said. "We really hadn't done anything like that before."

Reuters

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Editor Louie C. Camino

IN FINE FORM. Lea also won the Aliw award for Best Major Concert for her "Songs from Home."

Entertainer of the Year

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I'M ECSTATIC! I'm incredibly happy and honored," said Lea Salonga after winning this year's Entertainer of the Year award from the Aliw Awards last Friday night.

The award, the Broadway and West End star told INQUIRER Entertainment, is "an honor not just for me but for my family."

Lea now stands alongside other Entertainer of the Year winners like Martin Nievera (1985, 2000, 2001), Gary Valenciano (1984, 1988) and last year's winner, Ogie Alcasid.

"Over the years, my brother Gerard and I have received quite a few awards from the (Aliw) foundation," Lea told INQUIRER Entertainment in a telephone interview last Saturday. "I think they are very kind to ever consider me worthy of such an honor."

Despite rampant video and record piracy in the country, Lea said she is very pleased with the state of the local music industry. She said that, if last Friday night's production numbers in the Aliw Awards show were an indication, "I would say that we are doing pretty well."

"It was fun watching the performers," added Lea, who co-hosted the awards show with Ogie. "Even watching the rehearsals was fun."

Young singers like Nyoy Volante, Nina, Jay-R, Karylle and Kyla were among the performers in the show held at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel Friday night. Leah Navarro, Mitch Valdes, Nanette Inventor and Janno Gibbs also performed.

Lea noted the appearance of talent searches in the country following the success of "American Idol" in the United States. "I don't mind it," she said. "I think for a while there was really a lack of new people. A lot of the really established artists just kept working because there were just not many new ones.

"Now there are so many good singers that you didn't know existed. Thanks to these talent shows, you know that they're there. Immediately you have a smorgasbord of people who are not just okay but are incredible."

The Entertainer of the Year title was her second in one night from Aliw. She also won the Best Major Concert (female) award for her "Songs From Home" concert.

The Aliw Awards honored more than 40 performers in live entertainment in a show directed by Ronnie Henares.

Ogie won the award for Best Major Concert (male).

Gary Valenciano, who couldn't make it to the show because he was performing in his sell-out "Thankful" concert at the Araneta Coliseum the same night, won the award for Best Performance in a Concert (male), while Regine Velasquez got the award for Best Performance in a Concert for a female performer.

The other awards were:

Best Major Concert collaboration, "Greatest Hits" with Rico Puno, Nonoy Zuñiga, Rey Valera, Hajji Alejandro and Marco Sison.

Best Performance in a Concert collaboration, Kuh Ledesma, Jimmy Bondoc and Paolo Santos for "Night of Acoustics."

Best Performance in a Concert (group), Akafellas.

Best Musical Director, Raul Mitra, for the concert "The Songbird and the Songwriter."

Best Concert Stage Director, Bobby Garcia, for "Songs from Home."

Best Stage Actress, Musical, May Bayot for "Himala."

Best Stage Actress, Non-musical, Ama Quiambao of "Casa de Bernarda Alba."

Best Stage Actor, Musical, Franco Laurel in "Honk the Ugly Duckling."

Best Stage Actor, Non-musical, Joel Lamangan in "Iceman Cometh."

Best Stage Director, Soxy Topacio, for "Himala."

Male Best Stand-Up Comedy Act, Willie Nepumoceno.

Female Best Stand-Up Comedy Act, Ai Ai de las Alas.

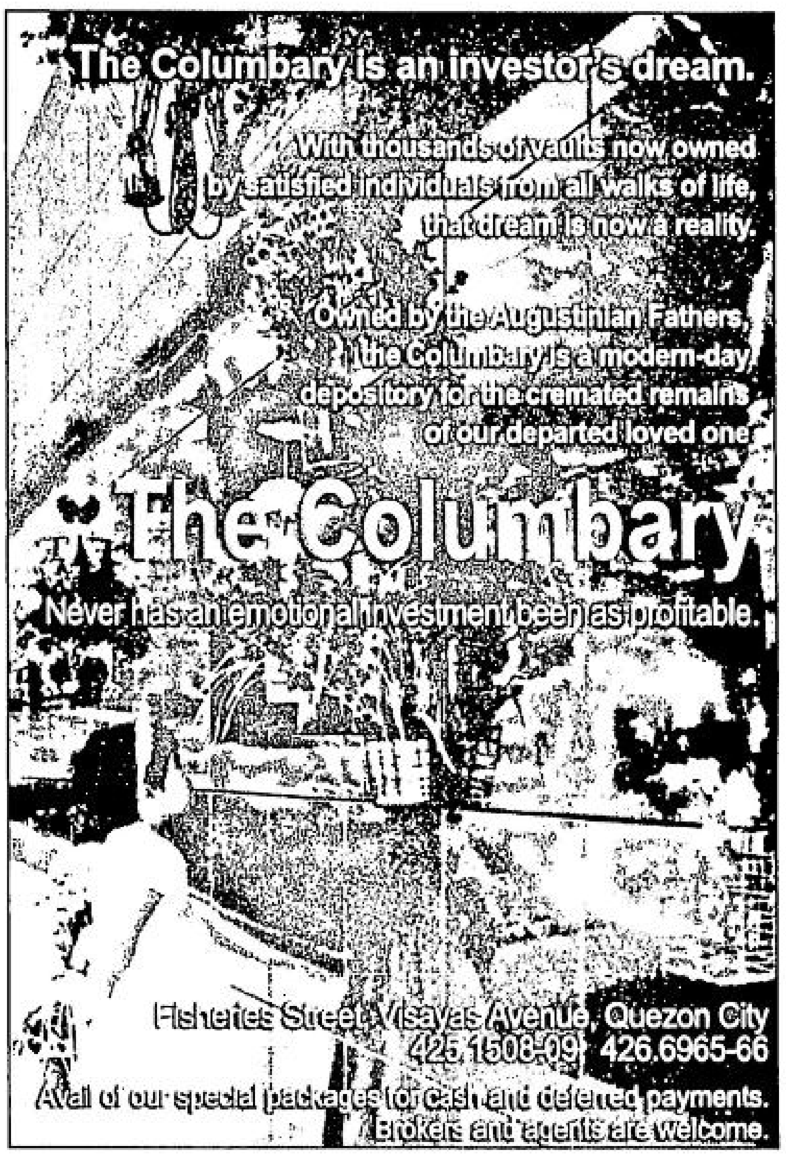
Best New Artists, Karel Marquez and Erik Santos.

Best Musical Play, "Ambon, Ulan, Baha" of Pixel.

Best Non-musical Production, "Ag-

ENTERTAINER/ C2

> 'Thanks to these talent shows, we now have a smorgasbord of people who are not just okay but are incredible'



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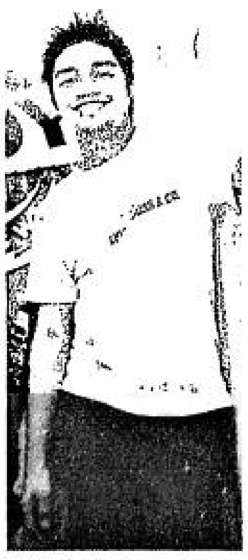
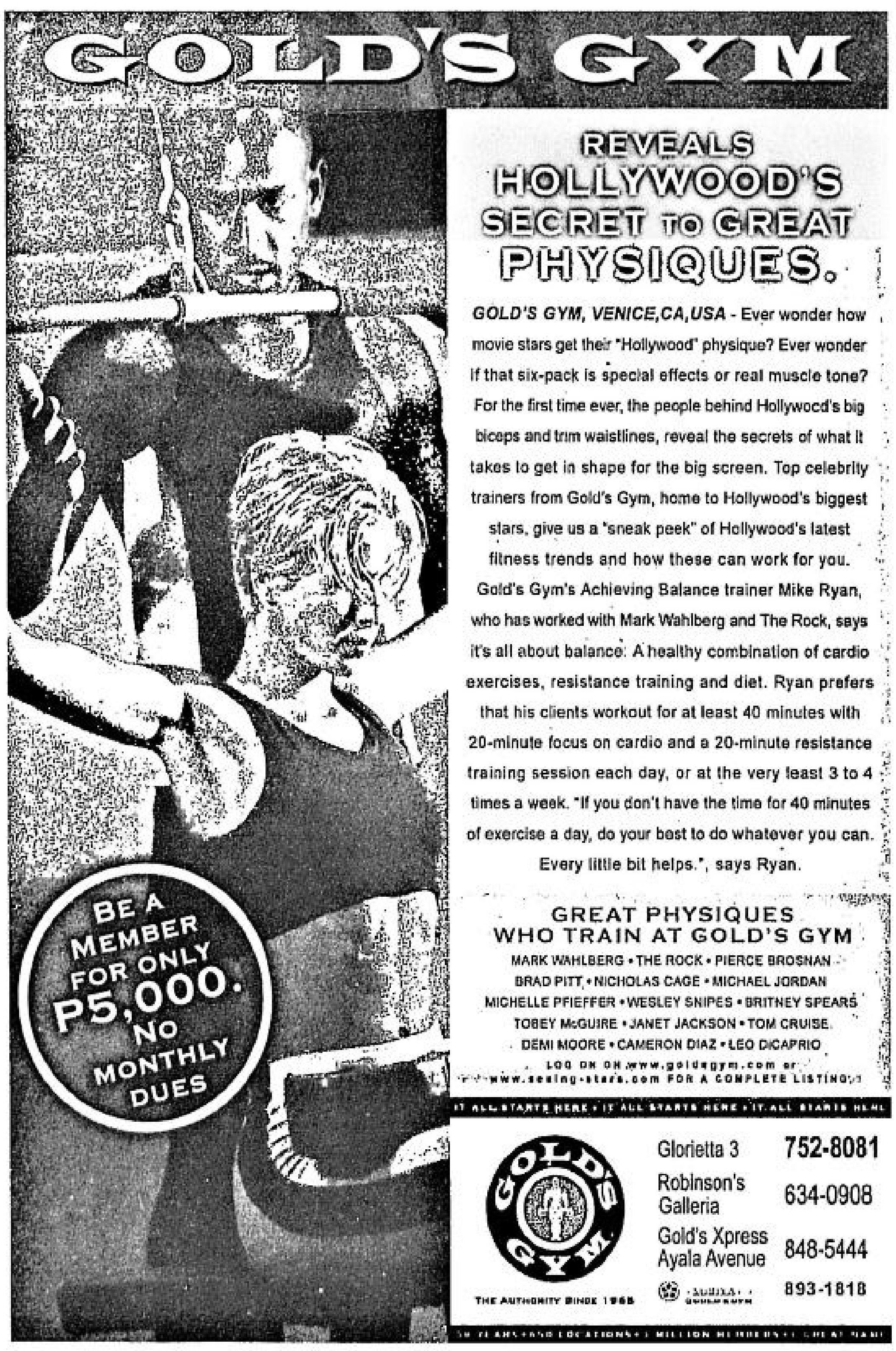


VOLANTE
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Nyoy Volante unplugged /C4

DID YOU KNOW...

New couple **Luis Alandy** and **Desiree del Valle** watched "Catwoman" at Greenbelt 3 in Makati City two Thursdays ago. Luis and Desiree politely asked another couple to stand up so they could get to their seats on row H.



GOLD'S GYM
REVEALS HOLLYWOOD'S SECRET TO GREAT PHYSIQUES.
GOLD'S GYM, VENICE,CA,USA - Ever wonder how movie stars get their "Hollywood" physique? Ever wonder if that six-pack is special effects or real muscle tone? For the first time ever, the people behind Hollywood's big biceps and trim waistlines, reveal the secrets of what it takes to get in shape for the big screen. Top celebrity trainers from Gold's Gym, home to Hollywood's biggest stars, give us a "sneak peek" of Hollywood's latest fitness trends and how these can work for you. Gold's Gym's Achieving Balance trainer Mike Ryan, who has worked with Mark Wahlberg and The Rock, says it's all about balance. A healthy combination of cardio exercises, resistance training and diet. Ryan prefers that his clients workout for at least 40 minutes with 20-minute focus on cardio and a 20-minute resistance training session each day, or at the very least 3 to 4 times a week. "If you don't have the time for 40 minutes of exercise a day, do your best to do whatever you can. Every little bit helps.", says Ryan.
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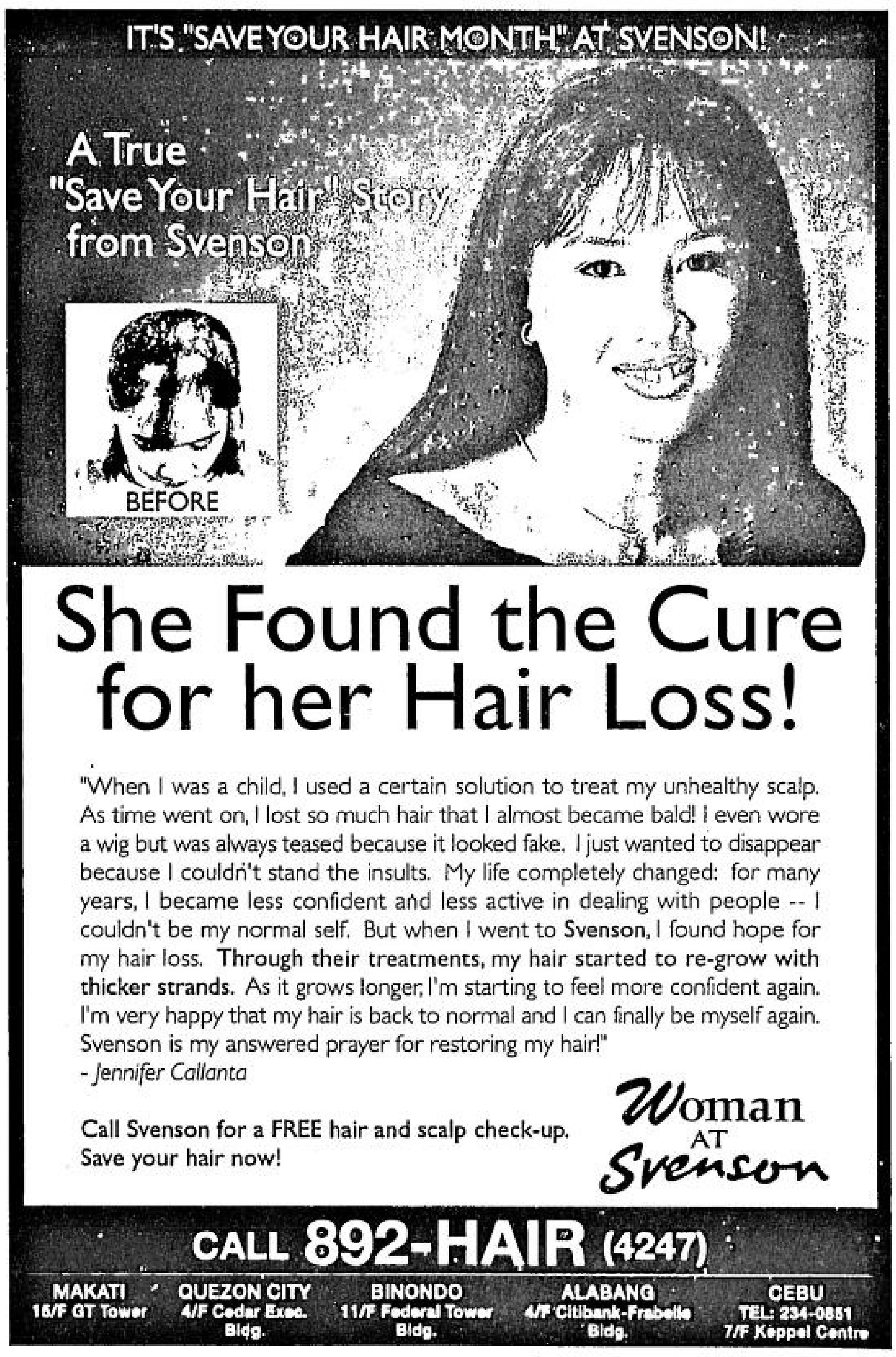

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Relevant topic

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE LOCAL movie scene has become so commercial in orientation that any film project that goes against this excessively "practical" bent deserves our support. Sometimes, however, the best intentions aren't enough, as in the case of "Beautiful Life."

Gil Portes' new film is a significant production because it tackles a relevant topic, terrorism—only, it opts to take a tangential view of the subject, concentrating on the aftermath of an urban bombing incident.

The film focuses on the effects of the explosion on the lives of its victims' loved ones.

Gloria Romero's husband dies, but she makes herself believe that he's still alive. **Angel Aquino**'s spouse perishes, only for her to discover that he left a mistress behind, whose son she later helps to survive a grave illness.

The movie is at its best when it focuses on the mother **(Amy Austria)** of the terrorist bomber himself. It urges viewers to do the difficult, to also feel for the bereaved mother, even if it is her son's action that has caused so many other mothers' and wives' grief. Amy makes it easier for the moviegoer to do this with her luminous and insightful portrayal.

We appreciate this and the film's other plus factors, but as a whole, the production leaves much to be desired, because it tackles much more than it can proficiently handle.

After a while, the relatives' different stories get jumbled up, scenes are often too short and disjointed to add up and peak both emotionally and dramatically, attempts at humor sometimes don't come off, and performances, with the notable exception of those turned in by Austria, Romero, Aquino and **Dina Bonnevie**, are too jaggedly intense to be truly involving and empathetic.

Still, we credit the movie's makers for going against the mainstream industry's desultory flow, and coming up with a relevant film that tackles one of today's growing concerns and traumas, despite the production flaws.

Feedback

READER Lynn observes: "We have too many talent-search winners, but too few distinct voices! Many of them imitate the singing style of **Regine Velasquez**, for women, and **Martin Nievera** and **Gary V**, for men. These copycats should be made to understand that having a distinct voice and style is one of the main factors for staying long in the business.

"Also lacking in the music industry are good arrangers! Unlike in the more creative past, today's songs sound alike. To me, the '70s were the golden years for Pinoy music, with the creation of timeless songs that were even more beautiful than some foreign ones." *(To be concluded)*

'Blue Crush'

AT 9 P.M. on Aug. 8, Cinemax screens "Blue Crush," about young female surfers obsessed with riding the best waves and topping a major surfing competition. Stars include **Kate Botsworth, Michelle Rodriguez, Sanoe Lake** and **Mika Boorem**—plus some champion surfers.

Showing at 30,000 feet

SINGAPORE Airlines' KrisWorld entertainment package, KrisWorld, offers passengers exciting choices in movies, TV series, documentaries, news, sports and lifestyle shows.

There are six short feature channels to choose from, with a variety of categories: Sports, with behind-the-scenes action at events like Samsung Transworld Sport, US Masters Golf and Davis Cup 2004.

Music/Fashion, with segments and programs like Fashion Television, "A Concert for George Harrison" and "MTV Nonstop Hits."

Comedy, with popular sitcoms like "Friends," "Frasier" and "Everybody Loves Raymond." Documentaries like "Time Trip," "The Truth About Troy" and "Travelwise.". Plus travel and technology channels, and TV dramas like "CSI" and "The West Wing."

There are also over 50 CD albums to choose from, like **Diana Krall**'s "The Girl in the Other Room" and **Jesse Cook**'s "Nomad." Singapore Airlines flies thrice daily between Manila and Singapore, and to 58 other destinations.

'Path to War'

AT 10:25 P.M. on Aug. 9, HBO screens "Path to War," an HBO Original Movie starring **Donald Sutherland, Alec Baldwin** and **Michael Gambon**. The film explores how **John F. Kennedy**'s circle of Ivy League advisers led **Lyndon B. Johnson** down a costly path to war in Vietnam. **John Frankenheimer** directs.

'Life-affirming' soap from GMA 7

SHOW TIME

FROM the "Kapuso" network, GMA, comes the soap "Noel," the story of a street kid blessed with the special gift of healing and compassion.

"Noel" premieres middle of August. Playing Noel is 5-year-old Renz Valeriano, whom writer-director Joey Reyes describes as "a gem of a boy, a brilliant and natural actor, a pleasure to work with." The boy has no acting experience but has had ample exposure in commercials, including Jollibee and Ladies Choice.

Co-starring in "Noel" are Gina Alajar, Pen Medina, Anita Linda, Irma Adlawan, and Celia Rodriguez, together with Tanya Garcia, Paolo Contis, Jay Aquitania, James Blanco, and "StarStruck Kid" winner Kurt Perez as Renz's best friend. Introducing are John Jari Munida and Nicholas Baña as Renz's heaven-sent guides.

"Direk" Joey calls "Noel" a "life-affirming and very real soap. The interaction of the characters, all suffering from the bane of everyday Filipino life, and how an innocent boy touches and changes their lives is the heart and soul of the soap. It is about people, underlining the fact that it is the heart that makes us truly human. It will inspire and uplift televiewers."

The theme of "Noel" is "Natutulog Ba ang Diyos," composed by Nonong Buencamino and Jose Bartolome, and published by Universal Records.

"NOEL." Valeriano (left) plays the title role, with "StarStruck Kid" winner Perez as his best friend.

Natural healing on 'Open House'

CORNEJO

"OPEN House with Gerry Cornejo," the weekly TV program hosted and co-produced by Gerardo Cornejo, two-time Consumers Union of the Philippines (CUP) Most Outstanding Radio Announcer, features natural healing and an interview with cardiologist Dr. Miguel R. Cornejo tomorrow, 7-8 p.m., over RJTV 29 (UHF channel 29).

"Open House with Gerry Cornejo" will also be aired on Cable TV, on Sky channel 61, Home 57, Destiny 87, Sun Cable 60 and 65, Sun Vision 20, and Cablenet 90, and on radio over dzRJ 810 AM Radyo Bandido.

It will discuss Dr. Cornejo's expertise and use of Eastern European methods and natural medicines which have produced medical breakthroughs in the treatment of heart ailments, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension and many sicknesses associated with aging. Dr. Cornejo's patients who visit his Heart Care Clinic at the Makati Cinema Square Tower Condominium come from Asia, the US, South America, the Middle East, Europe and Australia.

Also featured in the TV program are the testimonies of patients ranging in age from their 30s to 80s who have benefited from the treatment. Dr. Cornejo can be contacted at 811-1780, 8111278 or (0920) 9023577.

The segment on natural healing was produced by the ABS-CBN Foundation and will be shown on RJTV 29's "Open House with Gerry Cornejo" through the courtesy of Ms Gina Lopez, managing director of the ABS-CBN Foundation.

DID YOU KNOW...

The lead characters of the new ABS-CBN *teleserye*, "Hiram," are all named after European royalty. **Kris Aquino** is Diana, **Dina Bonnevie** is Sofia, **Mickey Ferriols** is Beatrice, **John Estrada** is Edward, **Heart Evangelista** is Margaret, **Anne Curtis** is Stephanie and **Geoff Eigenmann** is Andrew. "Hiram" is directed by **Jerry Sineneng** and **Jerome Pobocan**.

Entertainer of the Year

From page C1

noia" of Peta.

Best Female Classical Performer, Alegria Ferrer.

Best Male Classical Performer, Jonathan Badon.

Most Promising Entertainers, Sarah Geronimo and Jay-R.

Best Instrumental Artist, Raul Sunico.

Best Emcee, Paolo Bediones.

Best Choral Group, Loboc Children's Choir.

Best Dance Group, Classical/Contemporary, Philippine Ballet Theater.

Best Dance Group, Modern, Anime.

Best in Ballroom Dancing, Renier Mercado and Judith Melencio.

Lifetime Achievement Awards, Pilita Corales (first Aliw Entertainer of the Year), and Ramon "RJ" Jacinto.

A **posthumous award** was given to Rodrigo "Bimbo" Danao, also known as the "king of Philippine crooners."

Hall of Fame, Douglas Nierras' Power Dance and Joe Nicolas and the Manila Strings..

Aliw Awards founding president Alice Reyes said there was no Best Child Performer category because "there wasn't any child performer that excelled in the past year (in live entertainment)."

Proceeds from the awards show will fund the foundations projects such as the welfare fund for unemployed, aging and ailing entertainers, and free workshops for indigent and talented youth. *With a report from Joyce C. Abaño*

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2 CATWOMAN	2 CATWOMAN	2 CATWOMAN GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 COLLATERAL 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50	6 ELLA ENCHANTED	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 COLLATERAL 2 55, 5 30, 8 05, 10 40	2 PRINCE & ME
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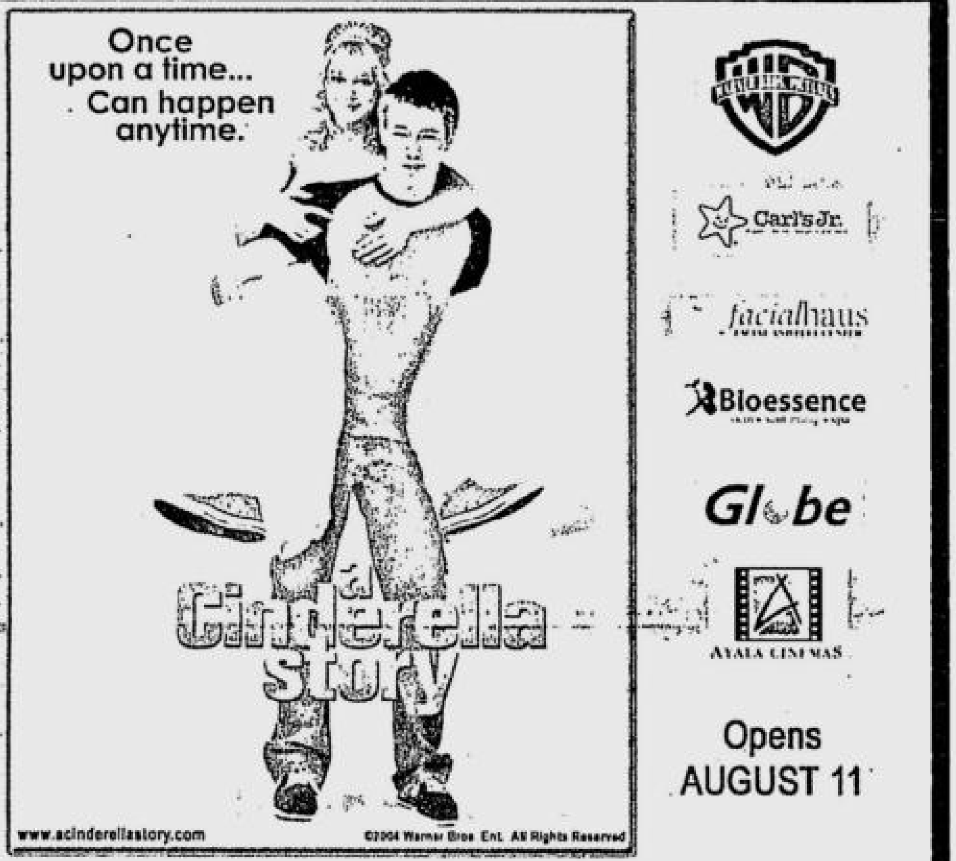
4 I, ROBOT		GB1 GREENBELT 1 1 CATWOMAN 12:20, 2 40, 5 00, 7 20, 9 40		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 1 50, 4 15, 6 40, 9 05, 11 30	4 CATWOMAN
5 GARFIELD	4 GARFIELD	2 COLLATERAL 11 20, 1 55, 4 30, 7 05, 9 40		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 COLLATERAL 1 10, 3 45, 6 20, 8 55, 11 30	5 COLLATERAL



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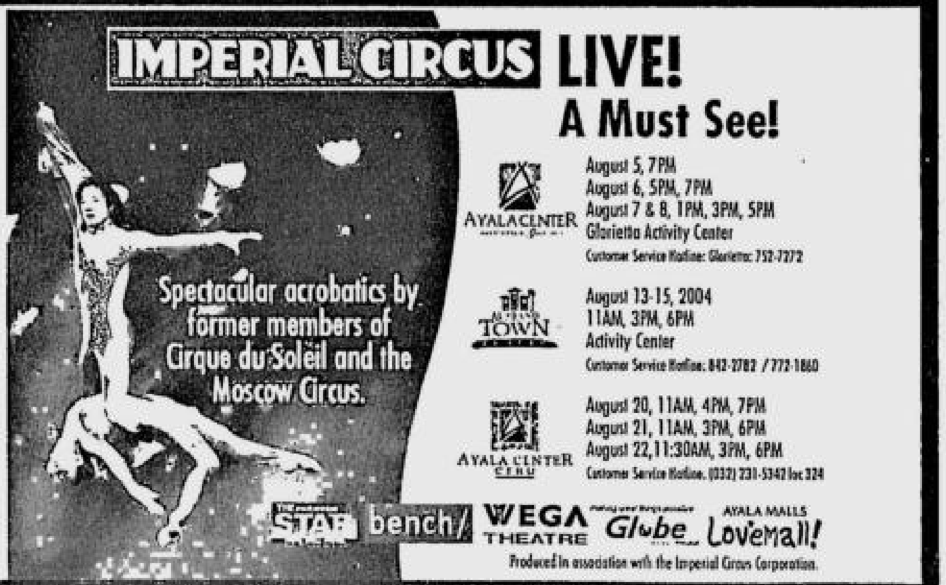

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AYALA MALLS LoveMall!

Nyoy Volante unplugged

From page C4

YOUR FLY IS OPEN. The black leather pants are patterned after his now-gone favorite jeans.

'UKAY' OKAY. The eye-catching, unlabeled shirt is an "ukay-ukay" find.

doors of his closet, while the walls of his recording studio is in blue.

Music equipment and instruments. "I bought my first personal computer for recording for P30,000 back in 1998. I was still in college then. I bought a new one just last year for around P400,000. I hooked it up with a mixer, module and monitor speakers. In the recording booth, I have a microphone made just for recording, and monitor earphones. Beside me are my synthesizers."

LACOSTE body bag

Shirts. "This Superman shirt is memorable to me. I'm into collecting Superman items, but I'm actually just starting. I really like Spiderman, but for some reason, a group of friends of the band thought I was into Superman stuff when they saw me wearing a Superman shirt once. So they started giving me pillows, stuffed toys and the like.

"This long-sleeved shirt has no brand name. I think I bought this in an *ukay-ukay* shop. Every time I wear this, everyone would notice. I've had this for four years now.

"This Ricky Martin shirt is my very first stylish outfit. It's been with me for five years now. I bought this when Ricky Martin was so popular here in the Philippines. I'd been looking for a shirt like this for a while, so when I saw it, I paid for it right away. I didn't have that much money yet so I really treasured this shirt. I would wear it every other day.

"I also have this light brown Levi's long-sleeves. You'd think it's just an ordinary shirt, but it's really cool. It has a message written with silver paint on the back. It says 'to live without loving isn't living.'"

Jeans. "This pair of Levi's jeans is memorable because I wore it during the band's first major concert, 'Loaded,' at the Music Museum. The group all wore the same style. I like its style, with patches all over. Levi's provides most of the band's clothes.

"This is my oldest pair of Levi's. I've worn it since I was in first year college. Look at how ripped it is now. I still wear it every now and then. Once, I wore it in a team-building seminar, *madaming sosyal at artista dun*. People asked me, 'why do you wear jeans like that?' I told them it was very comfortable and it was a fashion statement.

"I have a couple of leather pants, in black and khaki, one of which I always pair with my Ricky Martin shirt. I had them patterned after my all-time favorite jeans, which are gone now."

Jackets. "My current favorite is my khaki Levi's jacket. I think it's corduroy. I liked the style so much that I got two.

"When I travel, I only wear denim jeans because they give just enough warmth.

"This used to be my most expensive upper garment, my long-sleeved Benetton knitted jacket. It cost me around P3,000. It's not too expensive anymore, but when I bought it I didn't have enough money. I was still a college student. It's funny but knowing that I was wearing something expensive gave me confidence."

Formal wear. "I had this suit especially made for the debut of my sister, Nyay. I didn't know anything about suits so I left everything to the designer. Now I prefer the double-breasted type. And although it's not ideal for the climate in the Philippines, I want to be able to wear a trench coat."

Shoes. "I like Chuck Taylors so I bought four pairs recently. I've always wanted to wear an unmatched pair, now I managed to pull that off. I guess being a musician gave me the license to do it.

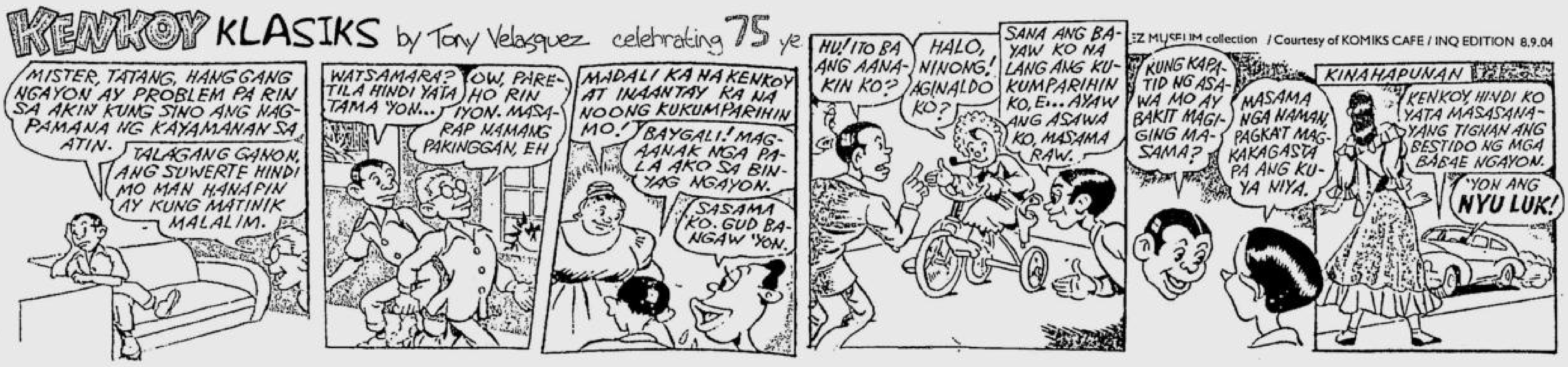
"My newest pair is this Nike Airmax Total. I've never really liked basketball shoes, but when my nephew and I were shopping and we spotted this, we bought it right away.

"This pair of tap shoes is really memorable. I wore this during our concert. I had a crash course in tap dancing. It was pretty embarrassing because I danced with professional tap dancers on stage. They were really good, but I had to look like I was better than them."

UNMATCHED AT LAST. One of his four pairs of Chuck Taylors

TOTALLY NEW. The Airmax Total pair is his newest.

ON TAP. Wearing these, he had to look like he was a good tap dancer.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SANA ANG BAYAW KO NA LANG ANG KUKUMPARIHIN KO, E... AYAW ANG ASAWA KO, MASAMA RAW.
KUNG KAPATID NG ASAWA MO AY BAKIT MAGIGING MASAMA?
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Nyoy Volante unplugged

By Marinel R. Cruz
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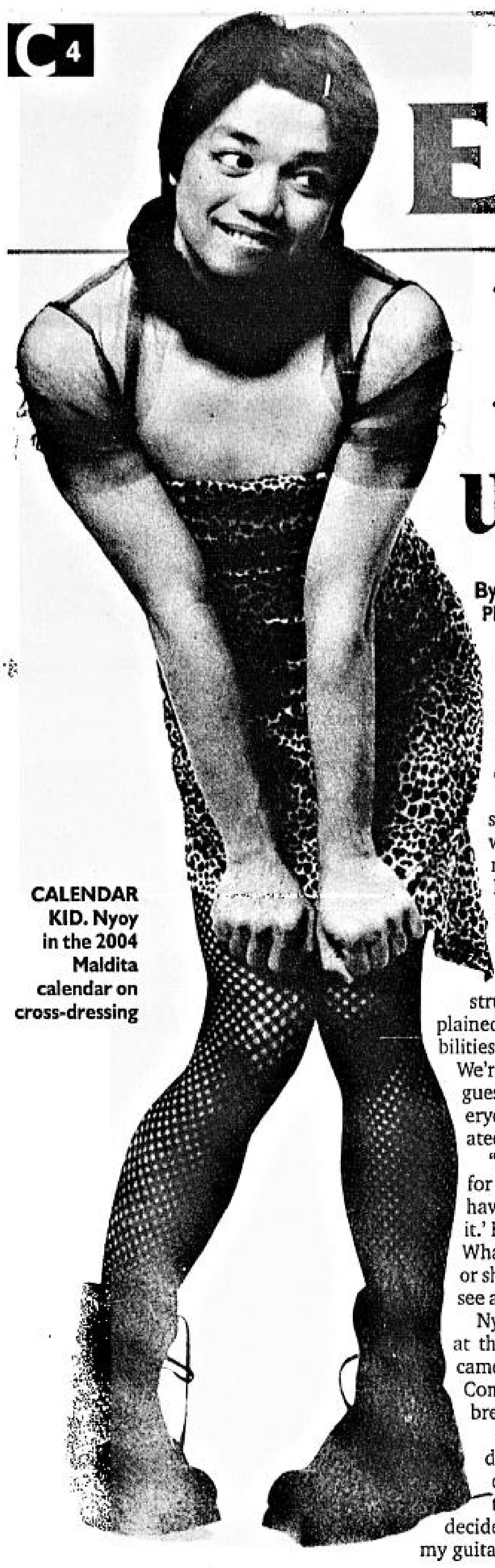

CALENDAR KID. Nyoy in the 2004 Maldita calendar on cross-dressing

ALL performers go through a phase in their careers when they grow tired of singing the same songs and performing in the same venues. Singer Nyoy Volante admits he is one of them.

Nyoy, the 26-year-old acoustic singer, says there have been times when doing the same things every night became very burdensome for him. Even his band, Mannos, has had the same problem.

"I have to admit that we didn't handle it well," Nyoy says, referring to the 3-year-old band. "We also struggled with an identity crisis, complained about unequal sharing of responsibilities. Luckily, that phase didn't last long. We're okay now. We've passed the test. I guess one just has to realize that not everyone is given the chance to be appreciated by a lot of people.

"I would tell myself, 'before, you'd kill for a position like this. Now that you have it you should make the most out of it.' Every artist goes through that phase. What makes or breaks an artist is how he or she will rise above it. You either quit or see a difference in the monotony."

Nyoy is a graduate of technical theater at the College of Saint Benilde. He became a talent of Viva Records in 2000. Composer Vehnee Saturno gave him a break in recording, Nyoy says.

In 2000, he released his self-titled debut album to lukewarm reaction. "It didn't quite pan out," he says. "I felt there was something missing. So I decided to go back to my roots. I grabbed my guitar and played for myself. When I did, that's when people started noticing. I realized that's the real Nyoy Volante."

Nyoy considers Gary Valenciano and rapper Andrew E. as his idols. "I like how they perform," he says. "I learn a lot just by watching them. From them I learned to give to the people what's due them and to do what is required of you even if you don't feel like doing it. Don't be shy. If you feel like jumping, then jump."

For aspiring singers, Nyoy has this to say: 'Just do what you want. It's okay if you compromise, but there's no greater feeling than to be appreciated as yourself.

"I plan to do this as long as I can and as long as people want me to," Nyoy says of performing. "Then again, I'd still make music, at least for myself, even if they don't want me anymore."

Most of Nyoy's hard-earned money is spent on upgrading the newly installed recording equipment in his bedroom in the Volante residence in Parañaque City. "I consider it a good investment," he says. "Even before I knew of music equipment and when I was too young to understand it, I was always trying to find ways to record my voice.

"It's fun to actually get what I've always dreamed of," he adds. "I'm just plain happy. It played a big role in improving my music, especially its quality. Also, I don't feel embarrassed when I invite my musician friends here. In fact, Nina was here recently."

Nyoy and Nina are busy preparing for their "El Niño, La Niña" show at the Music Museum on Aug. 13 and 14.

The five-bedroom Volante house was acquired in 1990, according to Nyoy's mom, Evangeline, an interior designer. What is now Nyoy's bedroom and recording studio was the first room to be renovated, she says.

"Nyoy used to sleep beside his musical instruments," she says. "Three years ago, we expanded his room. We tore down its walls and built a second floor. Now, he sleeps upstairs."

Mrs. Volante had the walls of Nyoy's bedroom painted bright yellow to match the

NYOY/ C3

OUT OF THE CLOSET

FOSSIL watch

NINA WAS HERE. He is proud of his music recording equipment.

SUPERSHIRT

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING RIPPED. He was actually asked why he wore pants like these.

Motown 'bad boy' found dead

LOS ANGELES—Funk singer Rick James, best known for his 1981 hit "Super Freak," was found dead Friday in his Los Angeles home of natural causes, police and the artist's representative said.

"The body was found by the musician's live-in housekeeper," said Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Jason Lee. He said no autopsy would be conducted because the death was by natural causes.

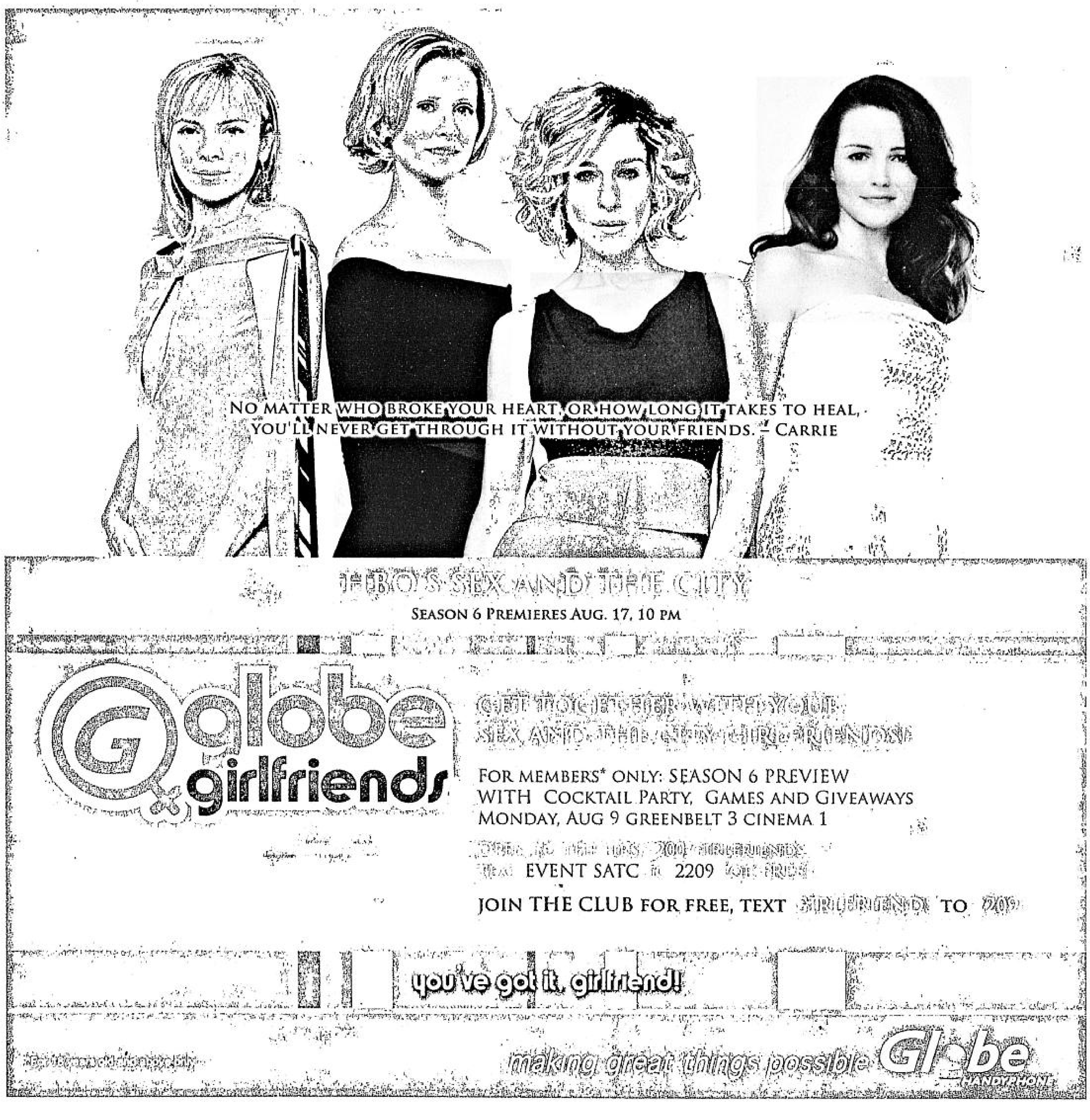
Born James Johnson Jr. in Buffalo, New York, James, 56, was credited with inventing the "punk-funk" style of music and cultivated a bad-boy image with flamboyant stage costumes and behavior.

But drug abuse and time spent in prison for assaulting two women helped derail his career in the 1990s, and the singer suffered a heart attack in 1998 stemming from his addiction to crack cocaine.

The "King of Punk Funk," also known as the "bad boy of Motown," was "in discussion with various studios for a movie based on his life," his representative said in a statement.

James had also finished an album that he was preparing to release next year.

James was a Grammy award winner. *AFP*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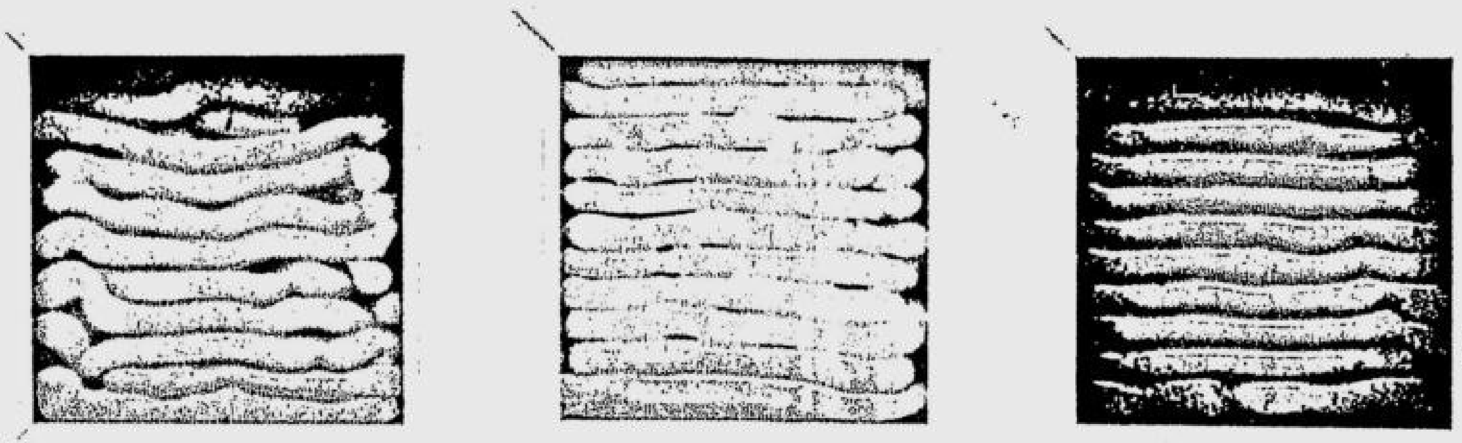
MONDAY **ARTS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ● SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

18 ways of looking at a mall

By Constantino C. Tejero



"UNTITLED #10 (Paint in Reserve for Future Use)," by Ho Tzu Nyen

THE PROLIFERATION of art galleries in malls is eroding the elitist image of art. It democratizes art, bringing the so-called high culture to the masses. Now any bone-weary mallrat and dizzy shopper may enter a gallery, replenish their energies, nourish their souls, even contemplate the Divine.

In a twist of irony, an exhibit is holding up a portrait of mall culture for mall-goers to contemplate: commodities, gadgets, consumer's habits, furniture, structural details. In effect, the artworks themselves become commodities on display.

"Display," curated by Gerardo Tan and organized by Finale Art File, is presented by The Podium at its 2/F Lounge until Aug. 12. The exhibit brings together six contemporary artists from the Philippines and Singapore, all in their late 20s.

Lim Shing Ee has created what appear like mass-produced toys piled on the floor. "Mono" is a mound of palm-size gray objects of polyester fiber, velcro, fabric, with patches of yellow, pink, red, orange, blue, pink, green.

"De-lighter" is furry black objects of polyester fiber with tail-like appendages of black-and-white stripes, of different sizes, with stainless-steel balls inside.

"I see these objects as sculptures—soft sculptures," says the artist, who holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Musashino Art University in Tokyo.

Cute but edgy

Another collection of soft sculptures is by Claire Lim Sheau Shih. The bits and pieces, mostly toys and kiddy accessories, are pinned on a wall, appearing like a mosaic of found objects, a bas-relief of odds and ends, or a mural of candy colors.

They're actually individual artworks with such titles as "Portrait of a Girl," "False Hopes," "Portrait of a Bird," "Portraits of Decorations," "Stuffed Moths, Butterflies and Fishes."

"I like soft sculptures," says the artist, "because they're so cuddly, so close to childhood. They may not be as enduring as stone or metal but they do last."

She admits to having been influenced by the glitzy imagery of Takashi Murakami. Another influence is the disturbing work of Nara Yoshitomo, whose cute but naughty girls evoke implicit violence.

Third is French artist and taxidermist Anita Messager, whose installations and soft sculptures are "powerful art, works that speak very strongly."

Various mediums

Claire Lim Sheau Shih, who has a Master in Visual Arts from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, also paints. She used to do abstract, but now she's into figures, particularly of animals, toys.

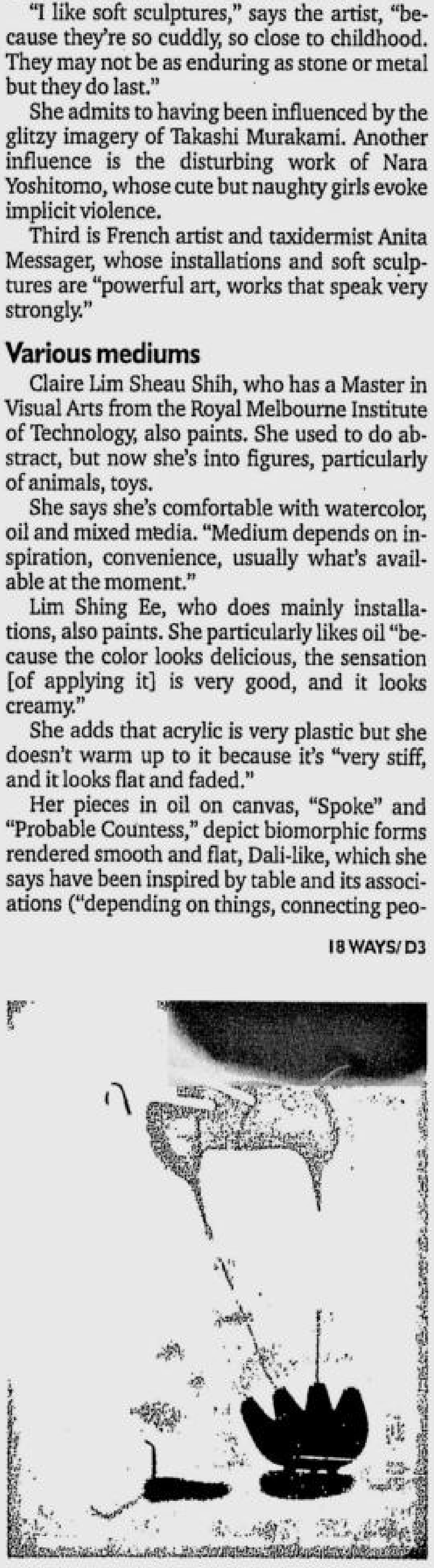
She says she's comfortable with watercolor, oil and mixed media. "Medium depends on inspiration, convenience, usually what's available at the moment."

Lim Shing Ee, who does mainly installations, also paints. She particularly likes oil "because the color looks delicious, the sensation [of applying it] is very good, and it looks creamy."

She adds that acrylic is very plastic but she doesn't warm up to it because it's "very stiff, and it looks flat and faded."

Her pieces in oil on canvas, "Spoke" and "Probable Countess," depict biomorphic forms rendered smooth and flat, Dali-like, which she says have been inspired by table and its associations ("depending on things, connecting peo-

18 WAYS/ D3



"SPOKE," by Lim Shing Ee

choose your dream

From Dreamers to Big Winners!

Congratulations to the winners of the SMART Choose Your Dream 2 Promo!

Grand Prize Winner
Edith P. Gabrillo
₱4,000,000 Cash*

1st Prize Winner
Manuel R. Ong
₱2,000,000 Cash*

2nd Prize Winner
Mandy Paco
Business Package worth ₱500,000*
+Nestle Lemonade products

*20% tax shall be shouldered by the winners

Bonus Prize Winners
Highest Pointers with the Most Downloads/Calls:

Prize: Package worth ₱100,000 [Choice of Computer Package from PC Planet/ Sharp 50.8 cm LCD TV (LC20B4US) and DVD Player (DV-SL10P) / Cross Country Bike]

Talk 'N Text	– Elizabeth Mantua**
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Weekly Winners
Prize: Package worth ₱50,000 [Choice of cash or any of the ff. prizes: Computer Package from PC Planet / Videoke Package of Sharp 73.66cm CTV (29V-FL350s) and MAGIC Mic / Set of 3 SMART Amazing Phones / Sharp 73.66cm CTV (29V-FL350S) and DVD Component(CD-750DV)]

Mar 21 - 25, 2004	Angela C. Urbano**	
Mar 26 - Apr 1	Ruel Pornobe**	
Apr 2 - 8	Herminio Alcasid	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
Apr 9 - 15	Mary Grace David	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
Apr 16 - 22	Dorothy Obligar	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
Apr 23 - 29	Jinky Javier	Prize: Computer Package
Apr 30 - May 6	Elizabeth Selga	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
May 7 - 13	Ister Maricar Garay	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
May 14 - 20	Albert Aquino**	
May 21 - 27	Jaime S. Ng, Jr.	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
May 28 - Jun 3	Ma. Theresa Garcia	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
Jun 4 - 10	Avigail Diokno	Prize: ₱50,000 cash
Jun 11 - 20	Joel Yco	Prize: Computer Package

**Winners are requested to call the SMART Customer Hotline or visit the nearest SMART Wireless Center for verification of choice of prizes.

₱1,000 Load Winners

March 21
Jhake Ridad
Alvin Sy
Melody L. Santiago
Lyle Gonzaga
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Marty Ulip
Sadie Banhao
Lhary Roque
Catherine Losentes
Gabriel Duyor Jr.

March 22
Chona Magallanes
M Vasquez
Lwah Celis
Evangelinavino
Erliza Cabanas
Laurice Grace Asuncion
Marcial B. Canazares
Rodrigo D Padua
Ray Elbert Llagas
Jefferson Tan

March 23
Lorna Lagana
Lucila Dela Cruz
Arlene V. Tor
Ramon Viola Jr.
Don Dumayas
Neil Persides
Dennis Domingo
Maria Theresa Chua
Noel Tolentino
Julius Cesar Gamson

March 24
Charlina Nocon
Genevive Velasquez
Lynn Montallano Alaria
Noli Flores
Marvic Soqueña
Peter Paul Taro
Jovet Fabian
Ismael A. Duria
Jose Mari Cortes
Peejay Jarme

March 25
Harriet Remiendo
Robelyn Nueva
Leopoldo V Chicote
Irene S Mariano
Rowena S Anero
Agnes Manalo
Monday/Marlyn Prepose
Remer C. Santos
Christian Ramos
Sarah Jane Llarena

March 26
Gertrudes Budol
Helouna Gestada
Gloria Quimo
Maribel Montoya
Fema P Mendoza
Marecris Manalang
Arlyn N. Marayas
Tadeo Andrade
Sarah Jane Lebria
Josa V Tarrayo

March 27
Ceasar Sanchez
Darcy Glenn Martinez
Reynato Perilla
Jim Bernadas
Irene Robles
Linda E Lopez
Enrique Torregoza
Bimboy Camello
Marianne Sia
Teodoro Colmo Jr.

March 28
Fe Macapagal
Rita S Liwanag
Gemma Raposan
Catherine Salazar
Lolita Lee
Ginalyn Egoy
Rachel Sarmiento
Jennifer Arlene P Garces
Larry Joseph Santos
Maria Eliza Dimal

March 29
Sofronio C Nasayao Jr.
Mary Ann V Llamado
Ritchie Bitantos
Hannah Borbon
Pepito Q Hilario
Josephine C Gonzales
Marita D Chua
Jojo Cubillas
Raquelita Jose
Joy M Narcilla

March 30
Editha Seguin
Janine Gerossa
Bess Villanueva
Mamonito Estanislao
Adnan B Abdula
Maria Eileen Uy
Alma Matacot
Enrico Operana
Frederico Canaveral
Marge Pamadulan

March 31
Manuel Ferrer
Riza Casaro
Luisa M Evangelista
Racquel Mitrante
Blanca Soriano
Brando C Belisario
Josa V Corpus
Glenita Mendoza
Emelyn P Daquiado
Vilma Lucino

April 1
Rosel Obila
Ireneo Rosales
Louie Hernandez
Elenita Lim
Rissa Ipapo
Noli N Flores
Karen Casquejo
Glebert N Losentes
Ricardo C Sobrevinas
Irene F Deyto

April 2
Froilan Escarmosa
Armando Tawagin
Joseph Vanson
Rechel Salvador
Michelle Fonollera
Thelma S Hortillosa
Uenerando Atugan
Marivel A Sevilla
Rosalina Santos
Jelly Maning

April 3
Jessica Amores
Maria Ruella P Lachica
Ralph N Falculan
Gloria Sosa
Ermalyn Ibardo
Mayera Sindatok
Imelda Lim
Katrina Jalani
Judith V Pagalan
Arnol Lopez

April 4
Aurelio Culling
Clarita P Dela Rosa
Eddie V Ong
Rose Baldenica
Luna Oberio
Carmela Baronia
Johana R. Austria
Stella Maria L Terrado
Ronnie G Ringor
Teresita Dimalanta

April 5
Mimi S Montero
Analiza L Guevarra
Evangeline Pagaduan
Nina Lace
Arnold Francis S Mercado
Leonila P Guerra
Elvera Tandog
Wina S Carillas
Merry Gutierrez
Arthur Raymundo

April 6
Julieta Amoyo
Guillermo F Monzon
Claudio M Sardenia
Lorna C Higuit
Rly San Martin
Michael Dave Laurente
Ariel Baduria
Jhon Jhon P Regachuelo
Crispulo Mudrona
Ma.Leseth Dadia

April 7
Elmar Geronimo
Edwin Ginebre
Chelsie Chido
Elmerito Sy
Mary Anne C. Yzon
Mark Lester De Guzman
Domingo S Pascua Jr.
Marilyn Lacson
Vilma Dayawan
Mildred Ligos

April 8
Mary Jane Cruz
Lanny L. Estorco
Jessie Pio T Balloguing
Jennifer Polintan
Connie Aristan
Ma. Loida Romana
Leoncia Q Formalo
Emilita Pineda
Osias Cruz
Saicoden Amama

April 9
Roweena Manuel
Nanette Abrenica
Analiza Lora
Juanito Ramos
Marivel A. Sevilla
Gina Galvez
Felisa T Martinez
Jimmy A. Alonzaga
Rachelle Herrera
Heber Rayo

April 10
Geraldine Chad Bayot
Lindalyn Soriano
Bernadette Tito
Ma Nelia G Laureano
Maribel B Alicdan
Amelia Tapay
Maria V Zhain
Marites M Acaso
Nestor Atarrado
Joanale Quijon

April 11
Jeanette F Ordoña
Marcel Incong
Aurelia E Obnial
Mark Jason Sastre
Alvin Bajao
Priscila B Chu
Ima Aldepolla
Arlen Tonson
Mer-nel E Cardenas
Mary Ellen B. Cachola

April 12
Nesly Borja
Gavino C Balatar
Beverly Brica S Guiang
Dina Eclarinal
Rose Carpio
Antonio Esagle
Von Lovel Zarra
Evelyn C Casudio
Renato Torres
Aileen L Beltran

April 13
Abegail Fernandez
Jamely J Magsayo
Robert Koa
Erwin Luspo
Rosela H Virrey
Rogelio Castro
Shirly L Ramos
Wilma B Santos
Jannet Daragay
Teresita Lansangan

April 14
Vilma Vallindsson
Reynaldo M Macalino, Jr.
Carolina Navora
Sheila Redido
Raquel Corral
Mailah Adora
Elizabeth M Columna
Adzhar C. Jalani
Evelyn M Galvez
Donna M. Castillo

April 15
Rowena C De Asas
Grail Estrella Rubio
Jacky Ferra
Ma Cecilia N Bueno
Ma Lea Pandes
Mary Jane Maghinay
Wilma Flores
Joel Mangalin
Adora Jimenez
Mia Macaraeg

April 16
Alma Polintan
Jeff Trono
Francis M. Colona
Melody Masongsong
Eric Christian Pancito
Cherry Ann Udasco
Reynardo P Delorta
Edisha I De Jesus
Virgie Luna
Arnaldo Balin

April 17
Las Pedregosa
Nolinda Creencia
Alejandro Jacobe
Dudding Gusilatar
Nelly Ann Dyangko
Katherine Abeigas
Julio Abasolo
Pia Suba
Edith G Lofstrand
Dory Bacay

April 18
Yolanda Rabamba
Cristina M. Co
Bernadeth Tenebroso
Lucy David
Noralda Pontillas
Nancy Fe Ledda
Marcel Sanchez
Janette David
Bonnie Lapuz
Caesar D Barcelon

April 19
Carolyn V Enriquez
Aida C. Sevilla
Josephine Lipura
Edwin Grayda
Maria Theresa T Pagaduan
Kathleen Jane Cruz
Ronnie G. Baracos
Mary Arlene F Burgos
Wendy Malaca
Gerry Muñoz

April 20
Marc Bryan Homecillo
Celia L. Homecillo
Gernalyn C. Lacambra
Eduardo Dionisio
Marylin Gonzales
Elsa B Arcega
Raquel R. Dinulos
Rossel T Fernando
Malou Balbalosa
Alona Costales

April 21
Ma Ruthel Peralta
Vivian Nostal
Eleanor S Tabo
Roel Bonito
Thess Deada
Jade Aguston
Yudel Ursulum
Lilibeth Afable
Eduardo Enrico
Imelda Carino

April 22
Rodena M Buerano
Vinson Tan Armando
Mandy Paco
Liezl Borja
Ma Victoria H. Corpus
Gina I Rosalita
Carolyn Baclig
Lorelei Salangsang
Amalia Carlos
Joy Z. Diones

April 23
Manfor Calino
Dr Christine G Acompañado
Annie Duran
Louie Acendido
Asuncion Avecilla
Robert Macabenta
Bianca Magana
Lucito Fernandez
Nita Rosa
John Roel Damasano

April 24
Daisy Coronado
Teresa Heraña
Julieta Baruc
Gladice Quinones
Crisanto Lavarro
Robert Llanza
Bel F Alfonso
Perla Abongan
Danes Enguito
Mary Rose Anthonette Y. Hernado

April 25
Glory Jean Bantugan
Ma Nelia G Laureano
Emberto Grandeza Jr
Gina Sabmano
Rene M Rosas
Donnabel Canencia
Donna Sebastian
Allan Laoreno
Jediah M Ueyama
Losbanes Rey

April 26
Marilou Nakamura
Norman Santiago
Florentina D Jesus
Luz Magallanes
Jose Edmer V Loja
Nancy Toledo
Christian Clerigo
Edgardo S Galang
Dennis Geraldo
Almeda Asuncion

April 27
Eric Plantilla
Marites Larrosa
Benjamin Nipa Mape
Elsa J Carlos
Ruby Lyn David
Percival Reyes
Elsa C Galut
Evelyn Melendres
Arlene Pabalate
Corina G Panergo

April 28
Marjorie R Tuaban
Jennifer Tecson
Katherine Lagura
Raymund Sioson
Marly Padilla
Olivia Mongcal
Gloria Gamab
Evangelita Modequillo
Ivy Karol N Bacolor
Shellie Rose T Lao

April 29
Sandie Oroz
Dona B Patacsil
Marissa Yabut
Marita Dagon
Analynne Masilum
Sherwin Peñaranda
Myrna V Sandrino
John Ronald E. Ibañez
Maila Diaz
Raquelina J Gabayno

April 30
Joy C. Sahagun
Ma Felomina Suttette A. Alindao
Rosa P Martinez
Gemma Abut
Mercedita Ines
Julio Mugdan
Romolou May Refareal
Wilman D Basancila
Letty Gepte
Mariena Velasco

May 1
Jovy Tangonan
Zenaida Cordero
Jenny-lyn Peralta
Vira Caddauan
Arcellyn Malunes
Evalynda O Cura
Joje Rurinez
Jeaneth S Omosura
Ma Jo Ann G Racho
Ryan Santos

May 2
Ma Simeona Sioney B Pillas
Ma Liza G Naguiat
Lizelle Kilantang
Cherry Inong
Alma Rossana De Guzman
Purita Capitulo
Darwin A. Manaois
Liezel Rivera
Eva Marie Sarmiento
Marilyn M Romulo

May 3
Jerry Masaya
Bernadette Mangune
Maria Clara Fetil
Susana Hernandez
Emi Pacos
Tomas B Malubay Jr.
Roma Colarina
Rodel Garcia
Josephine A. Manarighays
Elizabeth C Pahutan

May 4
Lilibeth D Castro
Diope Verar
Marites Besin
Clarence Merenano
Cherryl A. Calson
Joy P Lopez
Romeo R Padilla
Celestino Navarro Jr
Meloude L Fornesta
Ester Lamban

May 5
Sydney Ann Almosara
Victor M Madrigal
Mabel Pomperada
Jocelyn Bardon Layacan
Dennis Noli R Juanico
Anacleta B Zabala
Genevieve V Largoo
Kristine Garcia
Lucito Baera
Nina Cortuna

May 6
Jovelyn Tuastomban
Olivia Santiago
Raymond Matel
Michael P Langoan
Arlene Lingad
Rizalina Bautista
Cecile P Magsino
Maria Cristina S Quinto Mabung
Melyohn Catungal
Flordeliza B Tolentino

May 7
Floriano Ochavillo
Melvin Abreu
Cannie D Radam
Rachele Lacamara
Anna Gile
Joseph A. Sapaden
Gloria A Manrique
Kathleen De La Cruz
Cynthia Mae Saustillo
Rosauro P. Alfonso

May 8
Michelle De Guzman
Ryan Maquiran
Anacleto Bautista
Nicole Lopez
Rolando Paglagan
Juliet Cionelo
Agnes Taban
Benjamin Regios
Beverlyn Estrevillo
Michael Virgel M. Cabrera

May 9
Norwin Paredes
Sheila O Lardizabal
John Huang
Dianne Santos
Marilou E. Rufino
Andrea Catanjal
Rosanna Briones
Rose Oblepias
Gean Cesar
Alma Yuson

May 10
Kit Bantog Laureta
Olivia Deleon
Aida B Alcala
Amalia Reyes
Sinamar Padronan
Susan Pelayo
Nenette Macamis
Luz C. Felicano
Elanie D Clark
Rowena S. Diwa

May 11
Susan G Estañol
Doris B Guevarra
Sheila Mae Caballero
Emma C Valdrez
Lester Wong
Cristina Limjap
Loida Babas
Joyce V Santos
Jennette Ladrido
Errick Artiaga

May 12
Weena D Pamotillo
Lamberto Ricafranca
Rita Garzota
Moreno Galapon Jr.
Eden S Zapatero
Grace Fuentes
Rhodora T Ibrahim
Arlyn Agravante
Rommel Ramirez
Jerusa Urbanoso

May 13
Bernardita Campos
Rosalie De Guzman
Maria Carolyn Sabado
Lorelie Serrano
Marlyn Cordero
Nena Mababa
Maritess Sabalon
Manuel Salvador
Virgie Cordero
Arden S Soquita

May 14
Helena Grace Belonio
Melania A Lapinid
Imelda Sesa
Gina Pimentel
Emilia De Leon
Trinidad C Toriano
Emily Gamboa
Anna Rebecca T Aquino
Mildred Alconis
Edna C Reyes

May 15
Ma Cheryl Diungco
Ricky Valdez
Heloise Barba
Ja Victoria
Romy Orolaza
Nenita Asi
Fralyn S Mayono
Ma Theresa F Clemente
Cezar A Babasa Jr
Ricardo Via

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Lorna M Areglo
Consolacion M Beltran
Romallah V Lacanlale
Melody F Arao
Rowena Bautista
Judy Damasco
Mary Rose Galanto
Rachel Macaraeg
Angelique Recto

May 17
Elsa M Mahilan
Pierre Angeli Laborte
Rev Fr Bernabe Flores, Jr.
Ariel Cunanan
Rolando Raquel
Miguela M Rosales
Nathaniel Carampatana
Joanna D Caare
Mary Jane L Montaño
Gemma Panglima

May 18
Daisy Maron
Hilda Arepentido
Lilia Elarmo
Jennen Depista
Carol Uncalan
Luvimin E Rueles
Emil Carlos
Lianlyn Dela Cruz
Primo Dagondon Jr.
Madilyn O Malabanan

May 19
Mike Sancoyo
Mar De Leon
Juliet E Orendain
Sarah Reas
Nora Torio
Rachelle Nessia
Marge Dorion
Flora Sampang
Richell Ignacio
Eugene Bambico

May 20
Janeth Cabrera
Anvis P Salvador
Ely S Santos
George Peter Paduhan
Karen Joyce Cabrera
Donna De Guzman
Ana Ampoloquio
Mylene Ranosa
Marynor I Monfero
Clarita Fabro

May 21
Don Don Alajas
Ethel Lansang
Neconita D Ibañez
Sally Tupaz
Norberto L. Pioquinto
Danica Dulay
Mary Grace Bool
Agnes Salazar
Antonn Oñas
Hermosa R. Quindoza

May 22
Jonquita Salvador
Alma Lapuz
Jocelyn Muingi
Lea B Barrio
Phamela Damayo
Joey Abelon
Elvie Esperas
Jose Ronald Galang
Ma. Cristina P Roque
Aileen Adriliano

May 23
Arthur I Dizon
Rosalita Suguitan
Evelyn D Pacanos
Emerenciana Torres
Michelle Chua
Ofel Banaag
Jennet Salalila
Jerome Gargar Escalante
Sharean M Malang
Estelita A. Concina

May 24
Mabel Montebon
Kim B Flaviano
Ludyvi P Delacruz
Jemma Haw
Aileen Tingkan
Maryjean Marzan
Edmundo Ona Jr
Yolanda Velasquez
Azeneth O Arciaga
Tina Dungca

May 25
Ivy Macas
Uby Ana Santos
Lea S M Custodio
Shi Q Antolin
Arl Jason Vistro
Lovely Gonzales
Albert Cabuang
Raymond Duarte
Dodjie Teodoro
Jobert G Soriano

May 26
Zacarias Bilon
Michael C. Lada
Cesar Cado
Gundelina Beltran
Michelle O Doyo
Michelle Tolibas C
Zonaida R. Realubit
Krista Marie D Viagedor
Victoria Manaloto
Christmas Jingle Gomez

May 27
Gretchen Miglaya
Laureen Buno
Maria Fe Tan
Shara Suaybaguio
Norma Leonardo
Remedios Migupoc
Julie Hesita
Joseph Medina
Arnel Velasquez
Jamila Rivera

May 28
Ofelia B Seno
Marites Magtang
Carl Vincent Galang
Stella Young
Edwin Natividad
Aruel Ambay
Regina Custodio
Edwin D. Villacisneros
Joanna Banqued
Maribel Lazaga

May 29
Maria Luisa E. Ramos
Isabel Pomida
Carlota C Pamposa
Bernard Saburre
Alain Derf Durano
Hilario Canilo
Marialma Bao
Yvette Marcial
Iza Mae Raceles
Marilou Ened Tungkop

May 30
Marisol Lumbre
Marites L Mia
Catherine Nufable
Irene Caranzo
Turong Felan
Corazon O. Barca
Ujane B Quiblas
Antonieta B. Masiddo
Criston Soriano
Gil A. Goyal

May 31
Ronald Gene Valdriz
Angelita Dinglasan
Jenifer S Gonzales
Perla Samson
Patrick Panugaling
Eileen C. Zapata
Maria Lorna Calumpang
Reggy Cabiling
Noemi Aliagos
Jovita P Vargas

June 1
Ronald F Fuhuran
Ritche Escaño
Mildred Jaimasco
Fernan Ong
Jennifer Aguilar
Junab Kasim
Alma Jumaquio
Charina Albesin
Beulah Octavio
Raina Saren

June 2
Justino E B De Jesus
Joyce Humawat
Jeane M Lopez
Silvino B Comings Jr.
Nelia Avena
Evelyn C. Guillermo
Ismael C. Nueva
Domingo V Jugo Jr.
Lino Andal
Ginyrom F Pangas

June 3
Jude Lintao
Merlinda Sinues
Catalina Concepcion
Rico J Ladaran
Aniceto M Barsera
Lemmuel V Lauron
Judith Catherine Morales
Agripina M Briones
Emma Nympha P Apostol
Jennifer Bianca Gerodias

June 4
Francisco Valencia
Rizzi May V Zafra
Nahda Amora Ala
Roberto G. Gonzales
Emily Cayetano
Cyril Costana
Demetrio Parsan
Quirino Dayrit
Arlie T Escandor
Clare G Palabyab

June 5
Evangeline C. Salvador
Marites Lacasad
Ma Cynthia B Cabrog
Matilde C. Circapada
Emma Arcega
Cherrie Anne C. Palmes
Lusita Torres
Alex Dolz
Racca Gutierrez
Charlito Padasas

June 6
Andres Blanca Chiu
Lalaine Mae R. Marquez
Jery Jane Nuarin
Ester Gonzales
Myrna Magat
Mara Shiela Reyes
Norilyn Rodillas
Belen Doctor
Rolando Suaverdez
Liezl Amay

June 7
I Queyquep
Arlene Bertolano
Arcie Alicante
Ederlinda D Fajardo
Reynaldo Marquez
Evelyn Abordo
Domingo B Bognalbal
Ranio Bartolome
Imelda A. Lomo
Judy T Cayabat

June 8
Robert Salvador
Rosalyn D Cartagenas
Jimmy Depedro
Mary Ann Cabradilla
IE Lasomosa
Rory Danilo M Castro
Eulie Dellosa
Rodelio P Banaag
Rowena B Tuquib
Ingrid Mustafa

June 9
Nenette Cornejo
Cynthia M Usman
Rubie B Teves
Christian Michael G Gonzales
Arlene D Venerable
Marissa R. Alejandrino
Kristina Grace Tabladillo
Randy Anneb
Maribeth C Garcera
Cela Homecillo

June 10
Kenneth Ko
Marina P Talosig
Fchico E Fontanilla
Ellen M Gallardo
Pierril Tambong
Felix Suico
Lorelei Icutan
Faly Collado
Oliver Dela Vina
Richard Segunial

June 11
Ruby Ann Domalanta
Irma Mendiola
Luzmarbeth P Omega
Efren T De Vera
Jenny Rose Rance
Rosalie Domingo
Al-gafor S Abdulajid
Diana C. Awa
Gigi Ibarrola
Salome Abella

June 12
Linie Cortez
Mandy Tuogan
Rhea May Gaw
Angel Beth G. Daniels
Leslie Bernardo
Laureen Buno
Marjolien Ramos
Alberto C. Filosopo
Allan Hernandez
Catherine M. Presa

June 13
Rogelio M Fortaleza
Jenifer A. Dacones
Cristy R. Cortez
Shine Aguston
Candido Labagnoy
Lory Berrey
Edidia T Lopez
Sonny Lim
Ma. Antonnette T Palo
Rona Malapitan

June 14
Helen Balan-eg
Elaine Talaga
Jessofer Ong
Moises T Estigo
Jane Marchan
Abigail Escrada
Lerma D Gumba
Celeste Salva
Crisanto P Caliguid
Dorothy Causon

June 15
John Gary S Garcia
Marjorie Cu
Mylene Abad
Leah Custodio
Carmel Orbeta
Franklin Bautista
Marina U Navarrete
Antonio Cabarles
Anna Rita R Sunga
Namelolita T Lopez

June 16
Rizza Rivera
Jose Vernon Magtanong
Leopoldo M Malabanan
Herminia Lopena
Dodo Lucido
Claire Sy
Wilma Salvador
Vicente Marson
Almudin Bagundang
Avelina Calzado

June 17
Lucia P Lacros
Judith Arcedo
Myla Hernandez
Joseph B Garcia
Nestor C Laysoen
Garry Pineda
Reynalyn Jalla
Noy Buncio
Andres Sorbito
Edgardo S Tolledo

June 18
Rosie Agno
Grace R. Arriola
Sherry Rose Liwanag
Melinda B Nagos
Mary Ann B Pasco
Eric Quijote
Jana Florian Llanto
Lunita Tolentino
Ma Victoria A. Salonga
Philip Daniel

June 19
Eliza Dinawanao
Rosel Laylay
Jamelynn Olivera
Yolanda Apigo
Arlene Ramos
Gary Santiago
Maria Joly Gaba
Estrella Valente
Arturo A. Sondo Jr.
Vicente Salvo

June 20
Jeff Incong
Allan Anipuesto
Merle Manalascas
Armando P Larioza
Marisol Lumbre
Carmelita Pocsidio
Luisa Baluyot
Mitchel M Palola
Arcah D Pascual
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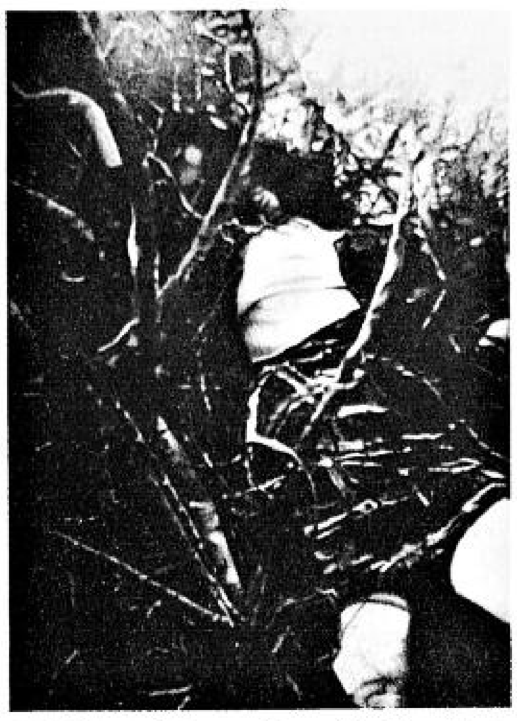
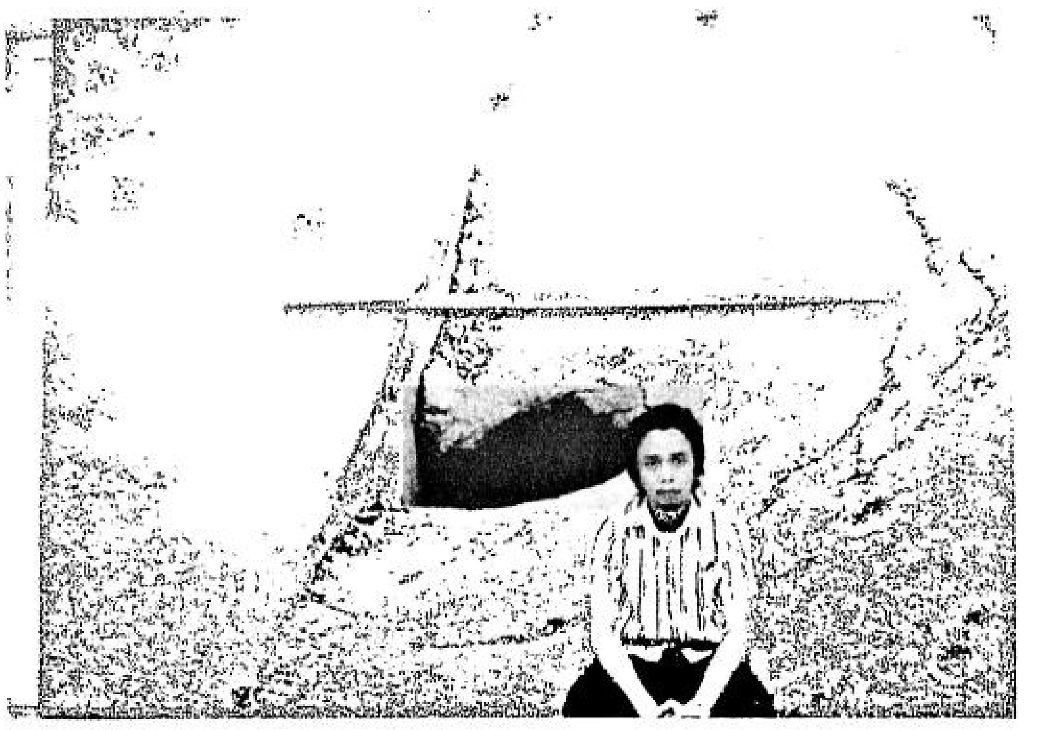


"BY the Tree's Strange Roots," by Geraldine Javier



JAYSON Oliveria

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

"UNSOLVED Art School Mysteries: Investigating the Shape of Blackness," by Luisito Cordero

Ateneo Art Awards' first harvest

THE ATENEO Art Gallery has conferred the first-ever Ateneo Art Awards on Luisito Cordero, Geraldine Javier and Jayson Oliveria in glittering ceremonies at the museum on Aug. 3.

The Awards, which will be presented annually in memory of Fernando Zóbel de Ayala (1924-1984), are given to Filipino visual artists under the age of 35 who, based on works in solo or group exhibitions in the last 12 months, have made an outstanding and significant contribution to the definition and development of contemporary art in the Philippines.

In the '50s and '60s, Zobel's discerning taste and critical eye led him to collect the works of Vicente Manansala, Hernando R. Ocampo, Cesar Legaspi, Arturo Luz, Lee Aguinaldo, David Cortez Medalla and Roberto Chabet, among others—artists whose careers, while still nascent, showed tremendous promise.

Zobel's choices have been proven correct. It is in this spirit that the Ateneo Art Gallery established the awards.

ATENEO president Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, SJ, Cordero, Oliveria, Javier and Martin Cook of Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

Luisito Cordero was honored for the exhibition "Building Bridges" at Big Sky Mind. It was part of a series titled "Unsolved Art School Mysteries: Investigating the Shape of Blackness." It was composed of a painting done directly on one of the gallery's walls which was meant to be erased at the end of the show; and a crude cardboard version of the Loch Ness monster. In this work, Cordero showed his preoccupation with mythical images, and his ability to work around a given space.

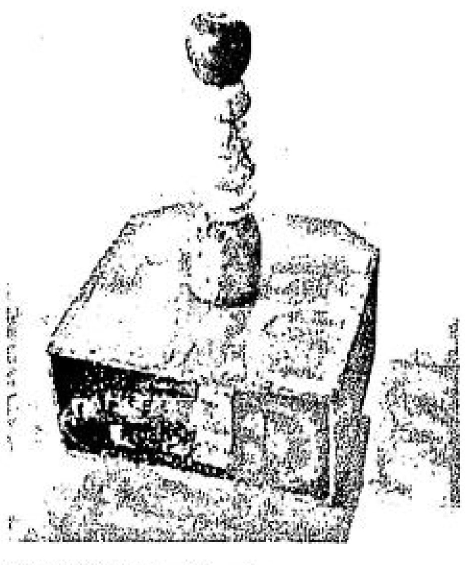
The other work was an audio CD recording of people singing in a seedy *karaoke* bar along 15th Avenue in Cubao. The "Night Lovers" was the soundtrack that punctuated Cordero's two-year stay in the area and, as with his other works, was a fresh representation of contemporary urban life.

Geraldine Javier was cited for "Slipping" at Finale Art Gallery. Javier's paintings have always been marked by a high level of sophistication. In this exhibition, she showed even further refinement, continuing with her depictions of death, moving from her earlier presentation of it as violent and untimely, to imbuing it with a sense of calm serenity —just like the elegant white lilies that she placed by its side.

Frozen alongside these images were bundled photographs encased in wax, recalling similar visions of passage and undertow. Javier's work rekindled the power of painting as a vehicle for expressing the most profound thoughts and insights.

Jayson Oliveria received the award for "Instinct vs. Learning" at Mag:Net Gallery, which provided a sampling of the breadth of work that he had accumulated: objects he manipulated into enigmatic constructions questioning art's materiality and process. Here, he transformed a range of everyday materials and discards into elevated visual puns that instigated the re-thinking of art and its conventions.

Says juror Ringo Bunoan, "One writer has described [Oliveria's] works as expressions of serious painterly concerns; playful moments of irreverent colliding images with frequent verbal intrusions, brooding disturbing silence, dark yet unfathomable; and odd narratives, ambivalently shuttling between the esoteric and the popular."



"THROAT," by Oliveria

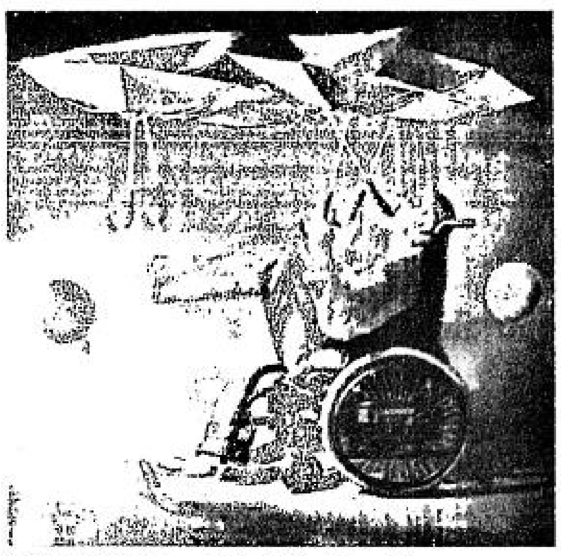
Each of the winners were presented a unique lightbox trophy and a cash prize of P20,000, courtesy of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

The works of the Ateneo Art Awardees, and the eight short-listed artists —Poklong Anading, Lexigius Calip, Kiko Escora, Troy Ignacio, Lindslee, Christian Tamondong, Maria Taniguchi and Ronald Ventura—are featured in "Critical Condition: The Inaugural Ateneo Art Awards Selection." The show runs until Sept. 24. An exhibition catalogue is available.

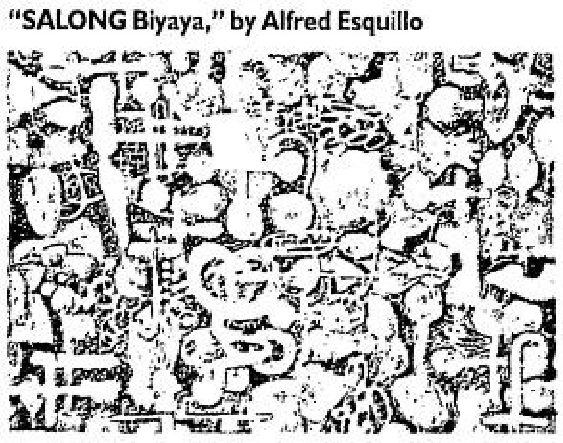
The Ateneo Art Gallery is at G/L, Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University, Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Call 4266488.

Esquillo at West, Alcazaren at Finale Art File

VISUAL ARTS



"SALONG Biyaya," by Alfred Esquillo



"PALIMPSEST" #1, by Juan Alcazaren

ALFRED Esquillo tackles the bizarre facts of Filipino life in "Dysfunctional," which features his latest works in oil on sawdust canvas, in West Gallery, SM Megamall, on Aug. 12-24. Esquillo won the grand prize in the Philip Morris Asean Art Awards. He finished Painting at the UST College of Fine Arts and Design.

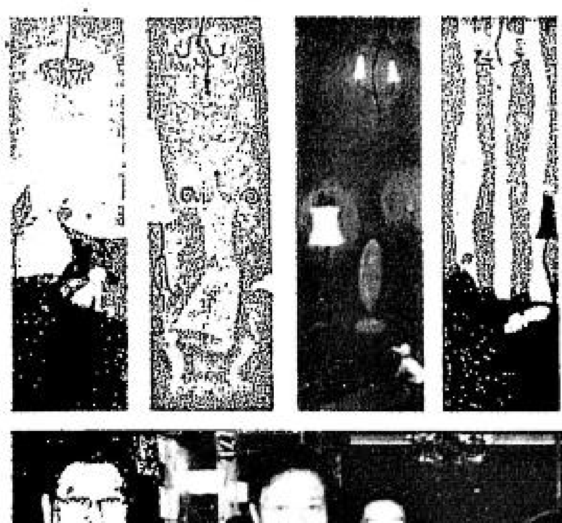
JUAN Alcazaren holds an exhibit until Aug. 19 at Finale Art File, 4/F, La O Centre, Makati City (outside the main entrance to San Lorenzo Village). "Default Values" features nine small- and large-scale works (7 ft sq). All have been executed in mixed media oil, enamel, varnish, acrylic, collage and found materials.

THE DRAWING Room showcases Bobby Nuestro's "Numerus" until Aug. 23 at the G/F, Metrostar Bldg., 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati. The exhibit features Nuestro's mastery of space and choice of colors with numbers as a new element in his art.

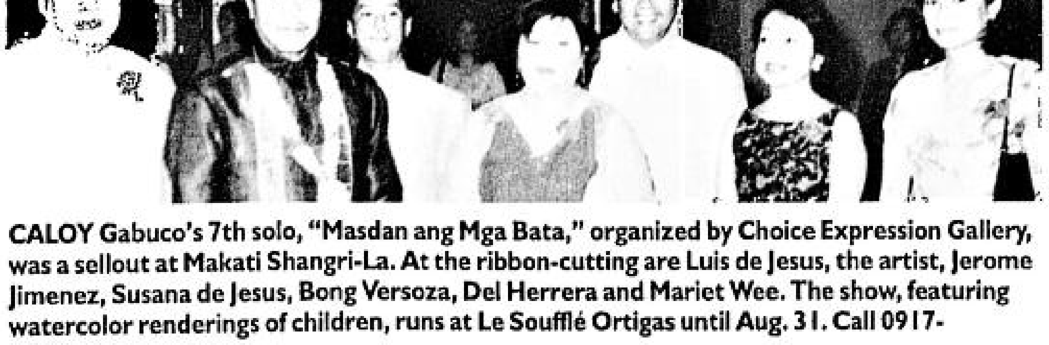
GALLERY 139 presents Cheryl Villanueva Hironaka's exhibition of artwork and furniture on Aug. 13-25, at 3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. The works show her passion for furniture which she depicts on canvases using mixed media. Inspired by New York artist Joseph Cornell, she now uses more details and texturing in her work.

"CADRETOILES" is the first solo exhibit of Michel Herbert. Featuring oil paintings with titles linked to water, fire and light, the exhibit can be viewed on Aug. 16-Sept. 3 at the Alliance Total Gallery, 209 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati.

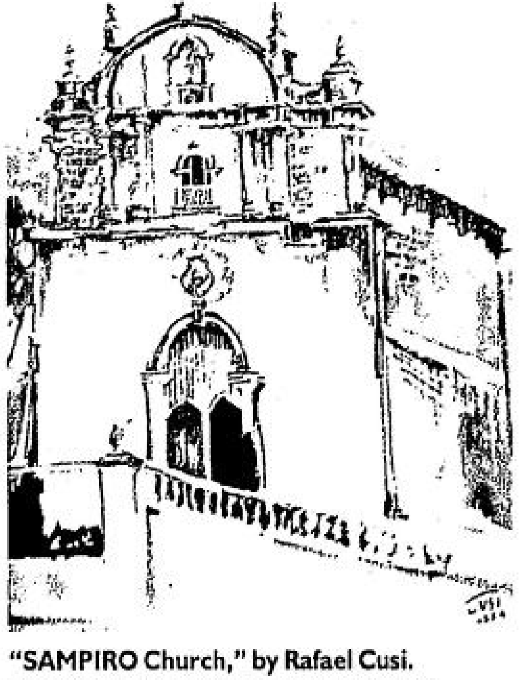
ALLIANCE Française de Manille and Galerie Astra present "Cosio Nudes" by Allan Cosio. The exhibit can be viewed on Aug. 18-Sept. 15 at Annex Gallery, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati.



"ART + Furniture," by Cheryl Villanueva Hironaka



CALOY Gabuco's 7th solo, "Masdan ang Mga Bata," organized by Choice Expression Gallery, was a sellout at Makati Shangri-La. At the ribbon-cutting are Luis de Jesus, the artist, Jerome Jimenez, Susana de Jesus, Bong Versoza, Del Herrera and Mariet Wee. The show, featuring watercolor renderings of children, runs at Le Soufflé Ortigas until Aug. 31. Call 0917-8941405.



"SAMPIRO Church," by Rafael Cusi. The Makati Poblacion Tourism Council recently sponsored an on-the-spot sketching session at St. Peter and Paul Church. The artists were Greg Bolaños, Jun Concepcion, Rafael Cusi, Noli Española, Jose Hombrebueno, Gene de Loyola, Oying Madrilejos, Jun Martinez, Al Perez, Dr. Ton Raymundo and James Neil Viola. Their works in pastel, watercolor, ink and brush will be featured in next year's calendar of the parish church. The works of participating students are on display at the church's entrance,

IN his European tour, Tam Austria, artist and philosopher, pays a courtesy call on Carmelita Salas, Philippine Ambassador to Czechoslovakia. They discuss "Recreamindoism," his artistic philosophy, as knowledge and devotion to natural belief.

COLLEGE art students examine the works of artist-academician Nestor Vinluan during the Shell Art Interaction Program.

Shell art program barnstorms Visayas

YOUNG Visayan artists were given a chance to dialogue with respected artist-academician Nestor Olarte Vinluan in this year's Shell Art Interaction Program. The program recently toured the University of San Carlos in Cebu City, University of San Agustin in Iloilo City, and La Consolacion College in Bacolod City.

"The reception was fantastic! I showed my visuals and delivered my lecture to a full-packed auditorium," said Vinluan.

At San Carlos, he interacted with faculty members, art groups and local artists. In Iloilo City, he joined the centennial celebration of San Agustin, which had just opened its Fine Arts Department.

In La Consolacion, a student asked him, "Why does an artist's work keep changing?" Vinluan replied, "If art is an expression of one's personality and you want to grow as an artist, then your work should also evolve."

The program is a parallel effort to promote the Shell National Students Art Competition. Launched in 1951, the contest has produced a harvest of talents including Vinluan himself, and National Artists Jose Joya and Ang Kiukok.

The competition is open to currently enrolled college students who may submit no more than two entries each for any of the four categories: oil/acrylic, watercolor, sculpture and digital fine arts.

Provincial entries will be accepted on Aug. 25- 27. Metro Manila entries will be accepted on Sept. 9-11. Entry forms and competition rules are available at any Shell office, installation or depot in the country, or a college's or university's Fine Arts dean or office of student affairs. Entry forms may also be downloaded from www.StudentArtContest.com.

"Winning art contests is not the end, but, of course, it can help the artist," Vinluan told the Visayans. "If you don't win an award, you should not be discouraged. Just continue working. What is most important is that you get to exhibit your work. The public should be able to see your art, interact with your work, study it."

18 ways of looking at a mall

From page D1

ple over food and drink").

She says she used to like Surrealism, and admits to have been "very inspired by Dali." Now her favorites are Dutch installation artist Mark Manders, the American Jessica Stockholder, Paul Klee.

Dynamic use

An unconventional way with paint is demonstrated by the witty pieces of Ho Tzu Nyen, who has a Bachelor of Creative Arts from University of Melbourne and is also a filmmaker.

The artist's dynamic use of paint startles and delights, particularly in "Untitled #10 (Paint in Reserve for Future Use)." Noted as "oil paint in framed boxes," it's actually a triptych of small box-type frames of bleached wood and glass containing layers of paint in red, yellow and blue.

The pigments have been squeezed layer by layer direct from the tubes, then pressed with the glass plates. The whole composition looks like folded clothing on shelves.

"Untitled #12," inkjet and varnish on canvas, weds traditional painting and digital technology. Here canvas has been painted then distressed, shredded, arranged, scanned in the computer, printed on another canvas, then varnished. The effect looks like wet or crumpled pieces of paper in red, blue, yellow, pink, orange, brown and black, on a flatscreen.

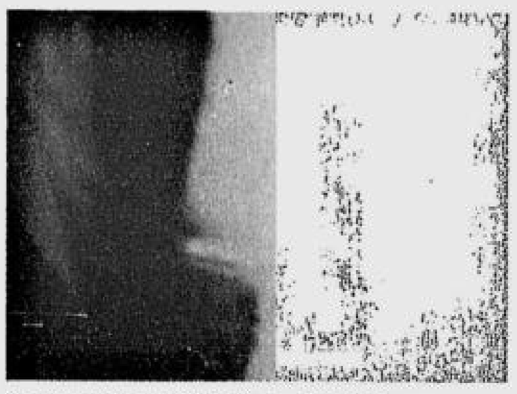
Enigmatic piece

Installations that are more complex are rendered by Billy Atienza, who has a Bachelor of Fine Arts, major in Painting, from University of the Philippines.

A brash and enigmatic piece is his "Reticence (Variations II, No. 1)," three fluorescent tubes fixed on the seats of three maroon chairs. It is done in the manner of Arte Povera, particularly Mario Merz's wire mesh-and-neon light signage "Unreal City," or Dan Flavin's fluorescent-light pseudo-monument "Untitled (To the Citizens of the Republic of France...)."

Like the Merz piece, this one may also be a statement on "the artificial and transitory nature of contemporary urban life," or a comment on "the bland standardization of modern technological culture." And like the Flavin piece, it also poses the question: Where does the art begin, and where does it end?

On the other hand, it could also be plain idiosyncrasy. As the artist confides, it's just his way of observing "the effect of fluorescent light on the chair." (Indeed, it recalls the deceptive lighting in wet markets that vendors employ to make their meat, fish and vegetables look fresh.)



"PNEUMALL" (detail), by Billy Atienza

Mysterious image

Atienza's "Pneumall" is more complicated, as it involves photographic prints, oil on canvas, TV monitor, surveillance camera.

The painting, in black and gold, is an extreme close-up of a detail from an image he photographed in the mall, then painted on the canvas with some really thick impasto in parts, until it is unrecognizable.

The camera and monitor set by the mysterious image, of course, record the viewers and passers-by, who reflexively behave themselves upon espying the gadgets. (That's mall culture for you.)

Lim Shing Ee comments that in this the young artists of the Philippines and Singapore are similar. "A lot are moving into multimedia, video," she says.

But Atienza would rather be known as a painter. Oil is his preferred medium, and his art is figurative, albeit fragmented figures.

Favorite artists include El Greco, Bosch, Polish sculptor Stanislav Szukalski, Mexican painter Susan Rothenberg, his UP mentor Roberto Chabet, this exhibit's curator Gerry Tan, Mafe Baluyos.

Mall signage

Gary-Ross Pastrana, another UP College of Fine Arts graduate, is represented by two large paintings just as puzzling as Atienza's imagery.

"Flash," acrylic on canvas, is a rendering in black with spattering of gray. "Warface," acrylic and collage on canvas, is gray with chevron of white, black and red. Ostensibly inspired by mall signage, they could also be taken as something else (flash of spy camera? security guard's insignia?).

MM Yu, also from UP, has two paintings and a collection of photographs taken inside and outside the mall.

The paintings are either abstraction or extreme close-ups, which would make them quasi-abstract. "Tranquil," in enamel on canvas, consists of stripes of gray, orange, blue, white and green. "The Porcupine Riddle," oil on canvas, has unrecognizable shapes in red, green, pink, yellow and brown.

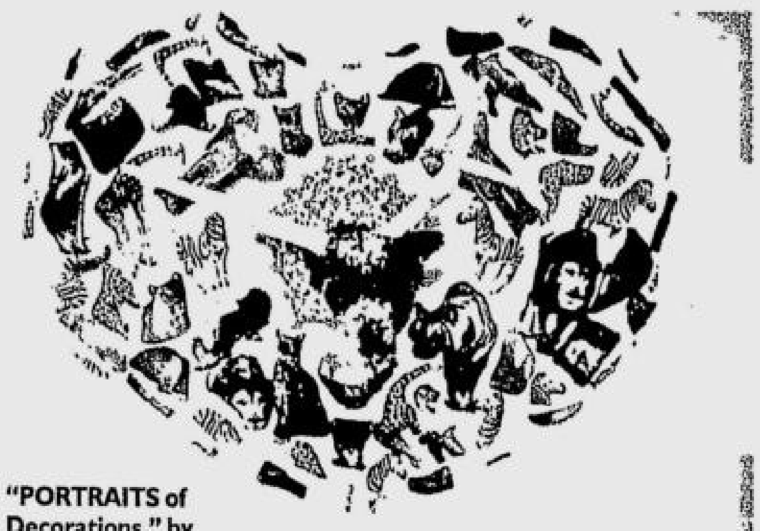
"Memoirs" is a photocollage of discordant images in the mall: Belgian chocolates, signage of shops and CR, "PG 13," "Laundry," Chinese characters, shelves of books, fruits and condiments, chandelier, candles, card catalogues, and hundreds of others.

These artists, both Singaporeans and Filipinos, seem to have similar sympathies and pet peeves. As often with the young, they may be thinking the same thoughts. What they see in the mall obviously go far beyond the mall.

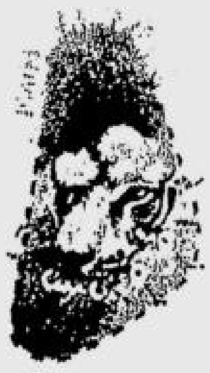
Going global

Lim Shing Ee says that to other countries Singapore may seem strict, "but actually it is not when you're there." She feels as artist she's "more Westernized, maybe because of the education system, the influences of TV, radio, even art."

She adds: "But I see it as just being global. We're just trying to be more universal. I have respect for Asian artists who search their roots in traditional Oriental art. But I would rather be more forward-looking than look back too much to the past."



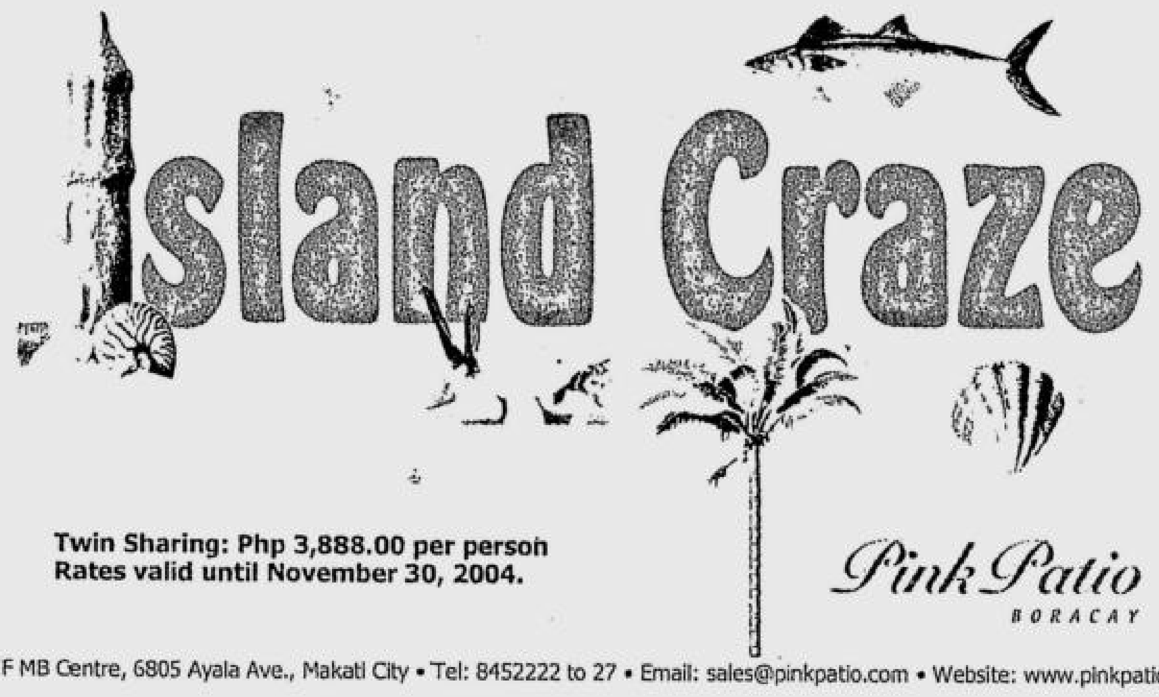
"PORTRAITS of Decorations," by Claire Lim Sheau Shih



Claire Lim Sheau Shih agrees: "Van Gogh, Picasso, Warhol—everything is moving. Why do something that's already there? The Masters are already there."

She continues: "Our culture is very different from those of other peoples, because we're a melting pot. We can't deny that I'm Chinese, but we're a bit different from China. I think we're in between.

"Art-making in Singapore is really not easy... If you want to exhibit nudes, you apply for a permit with the Censorship Board, then you inform your audience. But art for me is more of self-expression than to change the world. I just want to inspire people."



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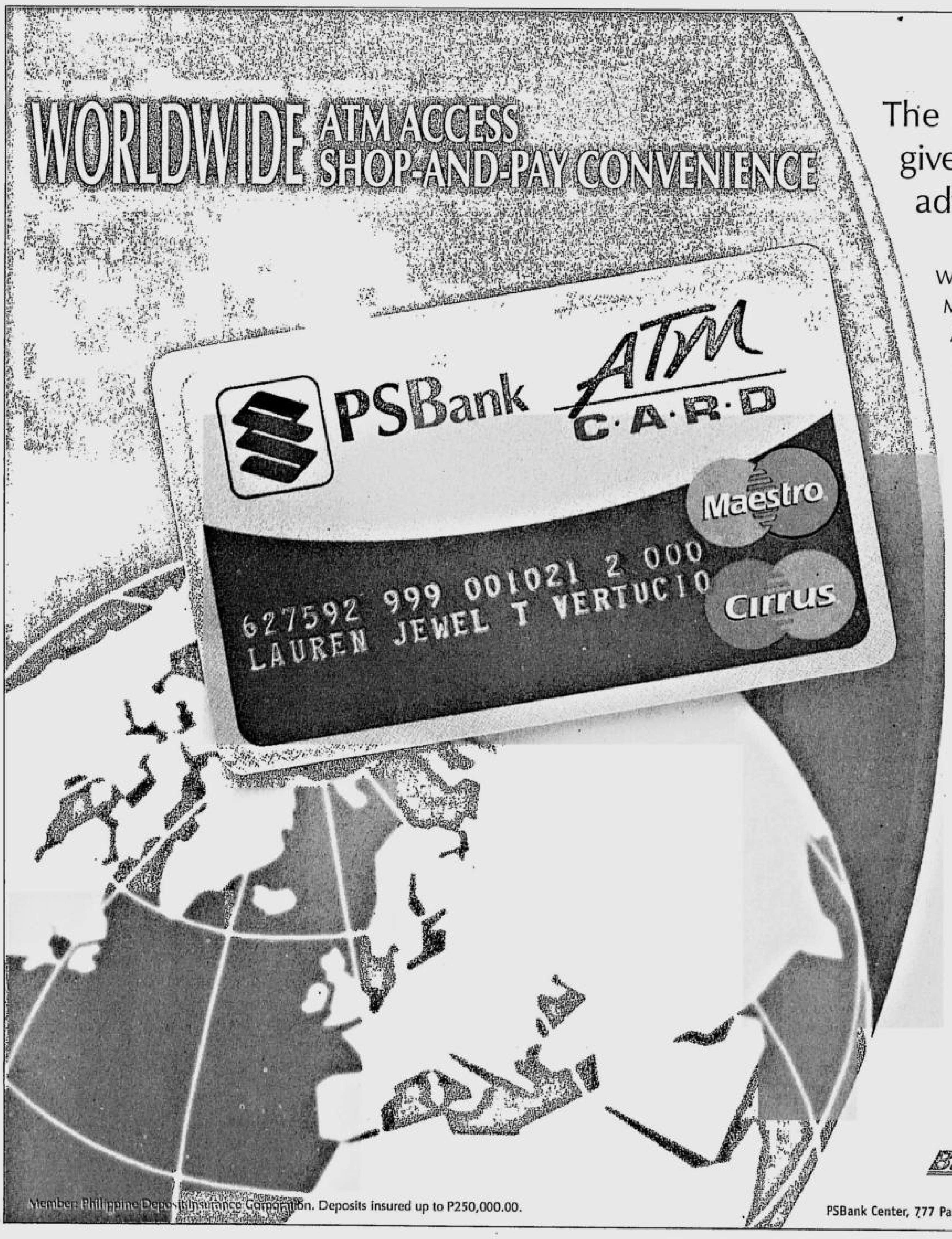

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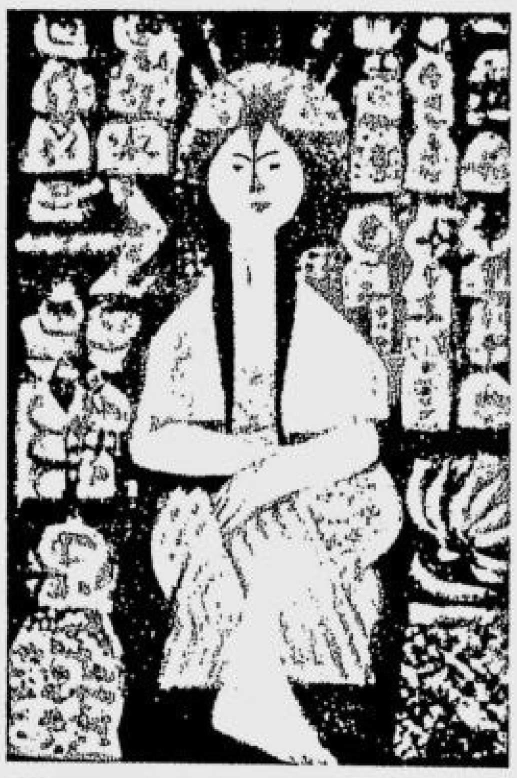


"WOMAN Vendor"

Malang's colors wash over Davao

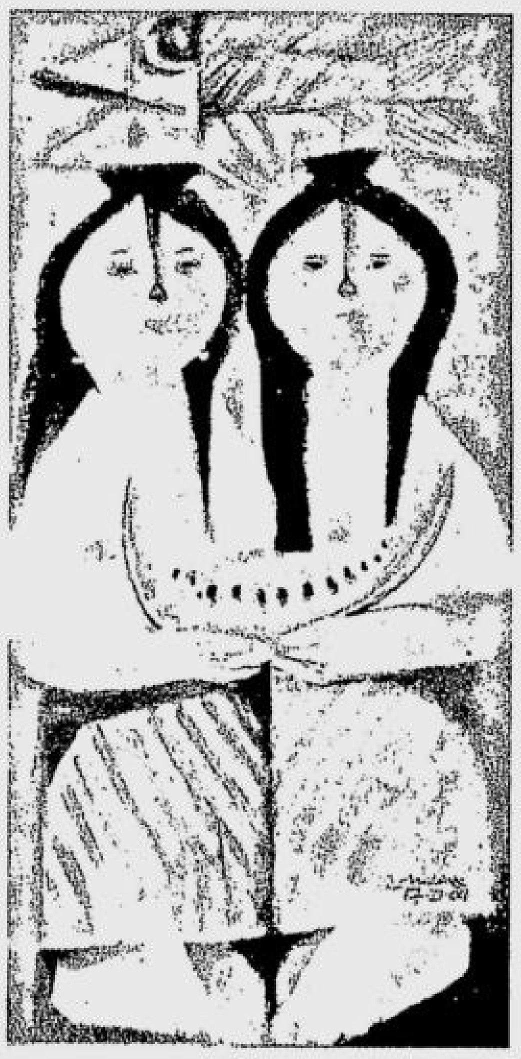
IN TIME for the Kadayawan Festival, Malang mounts "Tall Paintings," an exhibit at the Royal Mandaya Hotel on Aug. 18-30.

The show features Malang's recent pieces in charcoal on paper and acrylic on canvas, the first time that he is combining both black-and-white and colored paintings in one show. The subjects are women vendors.

Malang, 77, endows each work with his fine sense of design and composition, playing around the nuances of charcoal drawings and acrylic paintings.

"I'm still enjoying it," said Malang of painting, sketching and doodling every day.

Royal Mandaya Hotel is at J. Palma Street., Davao City. Call 6375795 to 96.



"TWO Women"

MALANG

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A bridge to the past

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

Tayabas and Sariaya in Quezon hold surprise heritage riches

IT WAS one of our longest trips ever. Eleven in the evening, and we were just limping home. It was truly tiring—but it was worth it.

My friend Ino had invited me on a trip around the mountain towns of Quezon. This was in preparation for an exhibit at the Met.

Our first stop was Tayabas, cradled in the bosom of Banahaw, the sacred mountain. We were warmly welcomed by then mayor Dondi Silang. He fed us a delicious breakfast.

Among the sumptuous tidbits that I briefly noted before devouring was a bread called *bonete*. It was warm and yielding, tasting of things fried and sinful. It was wonderful with hot scrambled eggs and tomatoes.

Happily fortified, we were off to explore the town. Actually Dondi's place, Mi Casa en Tayabas, is a destination in itself. The restaurant is quite pretty and cozy. There is an inn with rooms designed by Dondi himself. Such a versatile young man: a dentist, an actor, and even an inn-keeper!

In the garden is an incredible display of stone implements from grinders for grain to bins and troughs. There are also these crosses carved from rock which, I was told were used for an elaborate ritual.

Next stop was the Casa de Comunidad. This is like a town hall in the 19th century, recently restored. When we were there, there was an exhibit made by the young people of the town, " World Heritage in Young Hands," organized by the Met.

In a subsequent trip (yes, I went back!) I had a chance to see another Met exhibit, the traveling show "Letras y Figuras." This included a dynamic workshop where the kids painted right on the sidewalks. I remember thinking then that this was the kind of activity that would probably get us jailed by Bayani Fernando!

To return to our circuit, another stop was Tayabas Church. I am told this temple is one of the grandest that the Franciscans ever built in the Philippines.

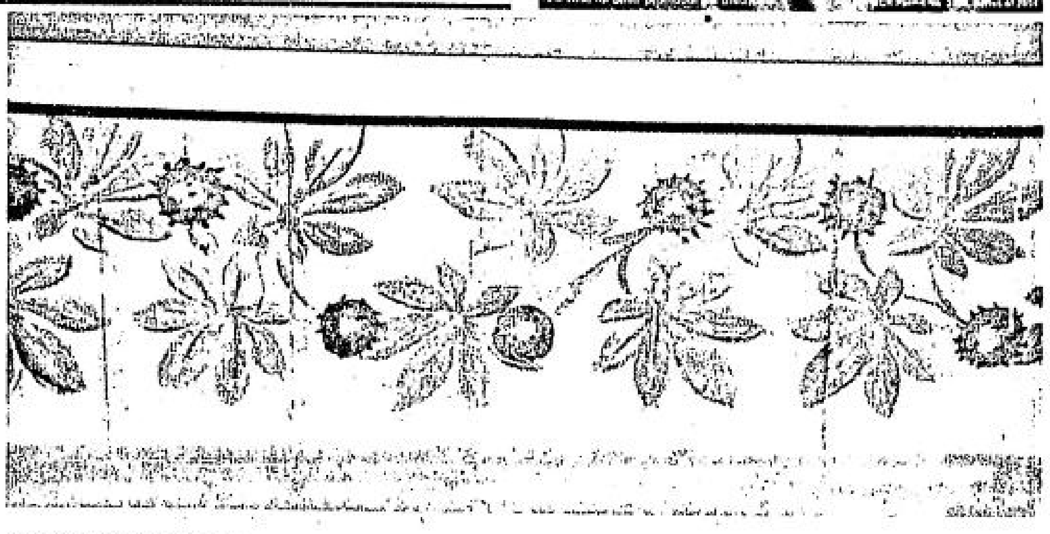
Among its features is a magnificent silver altar frontal (*naku*, believe me, it takes time to get all these terms right). What is so amazing about it is, if one looks carefully, one can make out among the beaten metal leaves and flowers cleverly concealed human faces!

I am told church scholar Ricky Jose has noted a similar design in Vigan. We also saw this face-in-the-ferns pattern in the silver pieces in Baclayon, Bohol.

Translator

Given my ancestry, it was no surprise I was asked to translate the Spanish inscription on an elaborate wooden bench near the altar. As you can imagine, the carving

A BRIDGE/ E2



RAMBUTAN ceilings in the Rodriguez house in Sariaya

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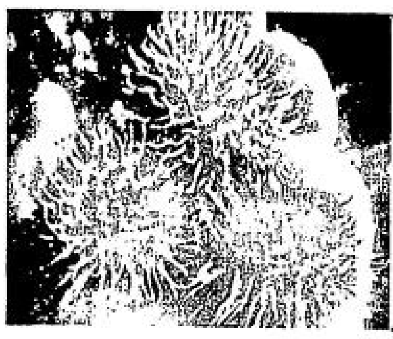
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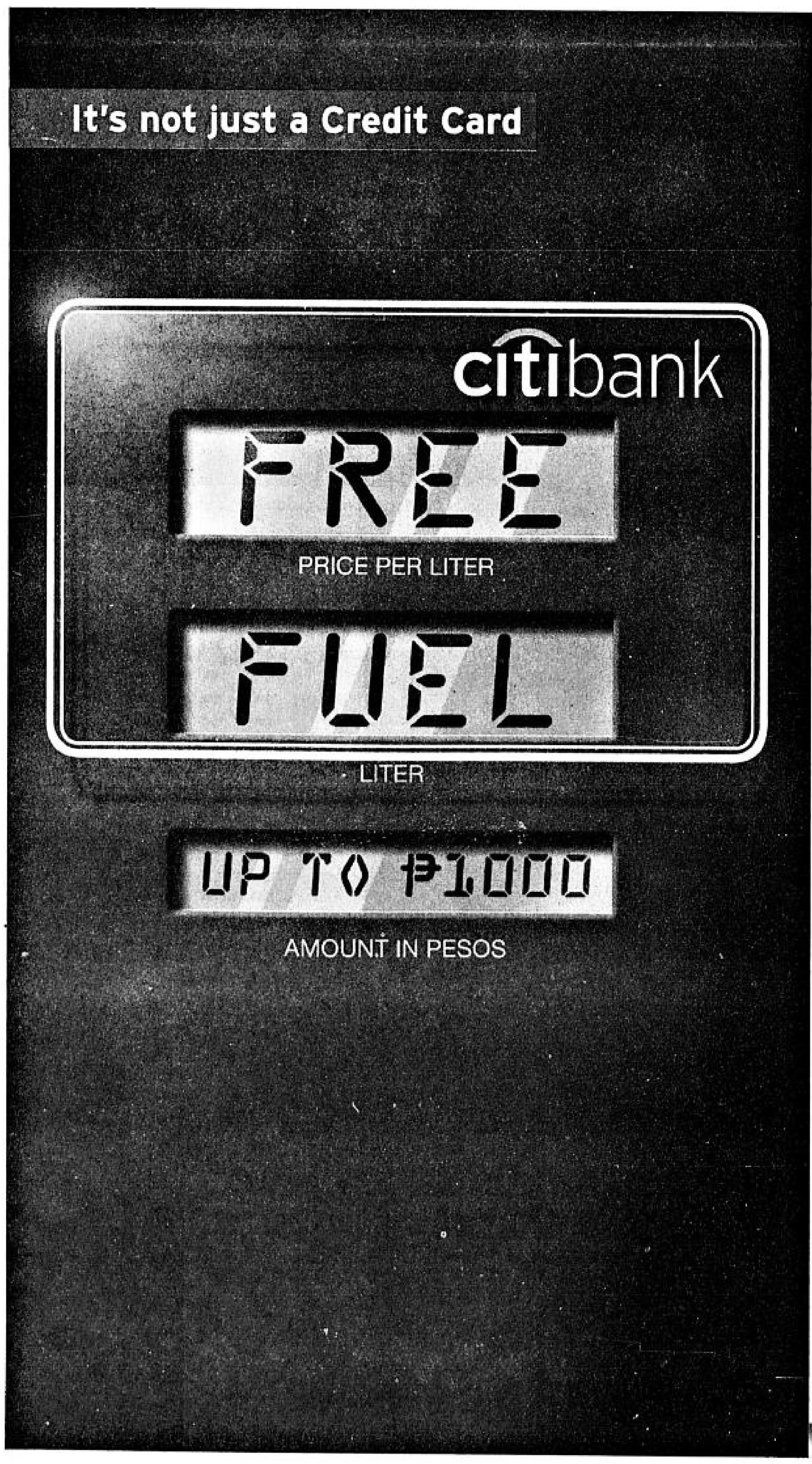
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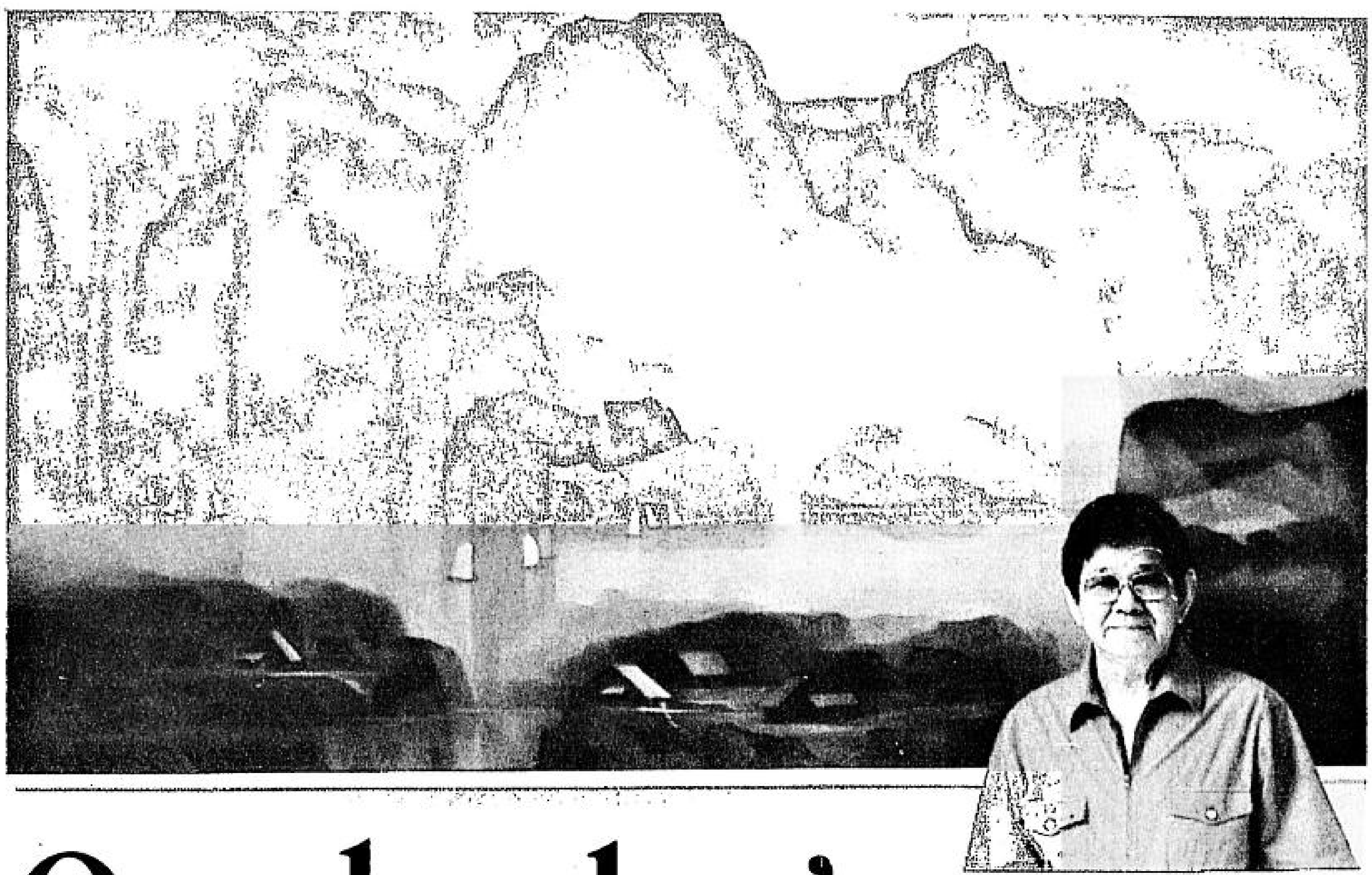


Onglepho's color of music and poetry

SINCE his birthday exhibit with colleagues Malang and Cris Cruz at the Asia Art Gallery last January, James Onglepho has been busy painting. Perhaps the most important of his works are the floral painting "Sharing" and the magnificent landscape series "Rising Sun."

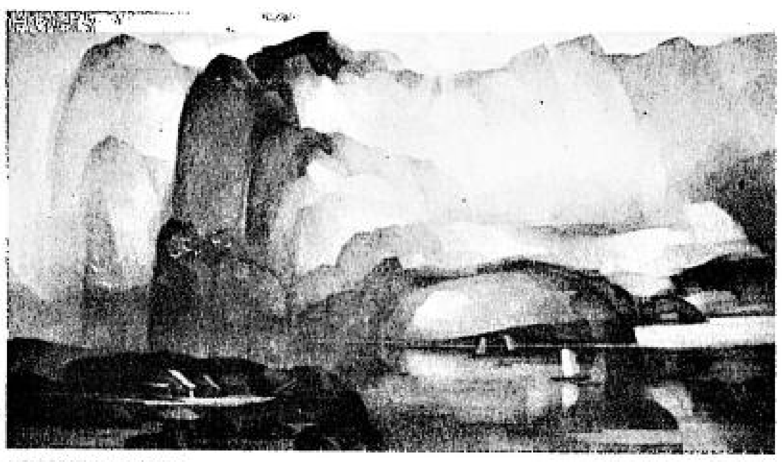
In the latter, he again demonstrates his unique painting style. Landscapes, in fact, have been recognized as the most important subject matter in Chinese painting for over a thousand years, a tradition that Onglepho, who is of Chinese descent, is proud to carry on through this day.

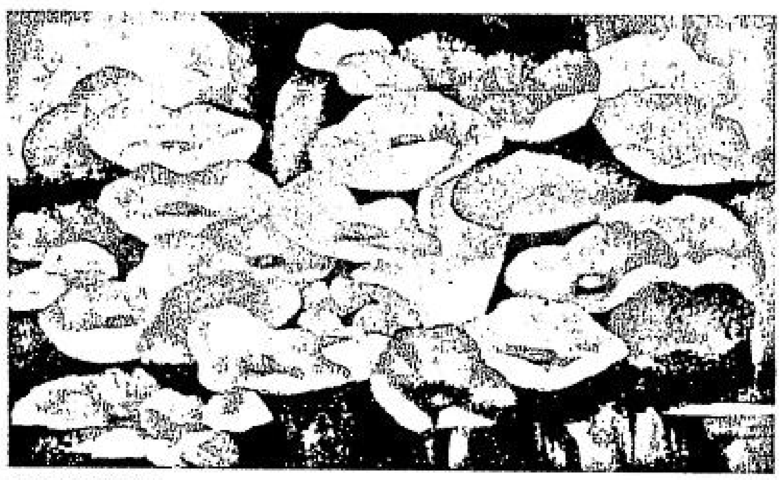
"Chinese landscape painting is one of the great manifestations of the human spirit, and is the most remarkable creation of the Chinese artistic genius," Onglepho said.

Known as *shan shui*, Chinese landscape painting dates back to more than a thousand years. Onglepho said landscapes had long been a mainstream subject in Chinese painting, unlike in Western painting which merely placed landscape as background to the human figure. It was only in the 19th century when the Impressionists started treating landscapes as an independent subject.

The main difference between Chinese and Western landscapes is perspective. Western painters usually go on location and paint landscapes on the spot. What they come up with is objective scenery, a representation of nature.

On the other hand, ancient Chinese painters would only observe and gather impressions of nature. They would paint only in their studios, composing objects on the canvas by using ideas and emotions. What they came up with, just like Onglepho's surreal landscapes, was subjective scenery.


"RISING SUN"


"SHARING"

Techniques

Onglepho said ancient Chinese painting developed two major techniques. The multiple vanishing-point technique gives a painting its solid, compact composition. The emotion and thought of the artist are emphasized, and the "deformation" of the subject matter makes way for the realm of creation.

Then there's the technique of exaggeration. Onglepho's "Rising Sun" series has prominent, towering mountains that provide a vast expanse for visual momentum.

Onglepho's landscapes then are not exact representations of nature, but infinite reproductions of his imagination. The imposing, grand and magnificent images of the mountains are not based on original forms and colors of nature; they are products of creative planning and choice color combinations. Onglepho calls them the "color of music and poetry."

He uses the viewpoint of a poet in observing the landscape of the real world. He then expresses his own visual language. The result is a "dreamscape," an expression of a perfect artistic concept.

Onglepho studied painting at University of Santo Tomas School of Fine Arts in 1954. Fifty years of discipline, extensive training and continuous experimentation all contributed to the development of his unique painting style.

Yet he is never satisfied or contented with what he has achieved in more than 20 one-man exhibits here and abroad. He always sees himself as a beginner, continually learning about art.

He said the three foundations of learning were "seeing much, suffering much and studying much."

"The more a man learns, the more and more he sees his ignorance," Onglepho said.

Kulay sa Tubig aquarelle exhibit opens Aug. 14

THE 21ST Kulay sa Tubig annual invitational watercolor competition-exhibition of Gallery Genesis opens on Aug. 14 at the Art Center, 4/L, Megamall A. Awarding of winners will be held at 4 p.m. on the same day. The exhibit runs until Aug. 29.

Organized by Gallery Genesis, the watercolor festival is on its 20th year. The contest will announce five winners and five runners-up.

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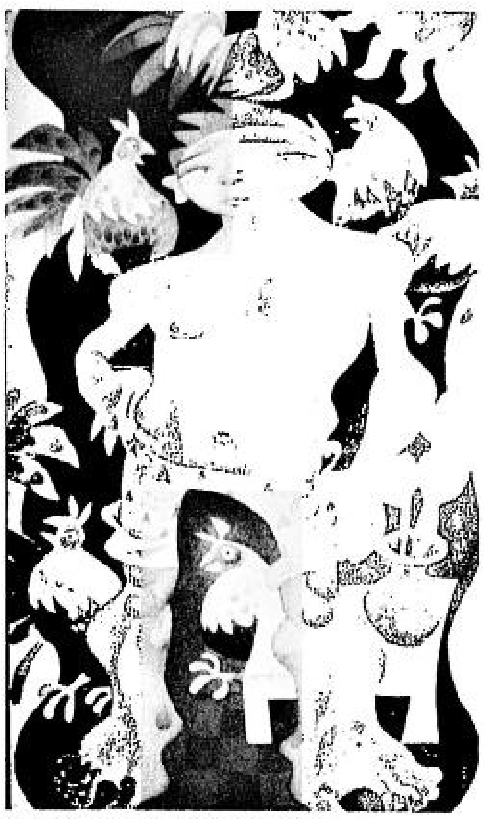
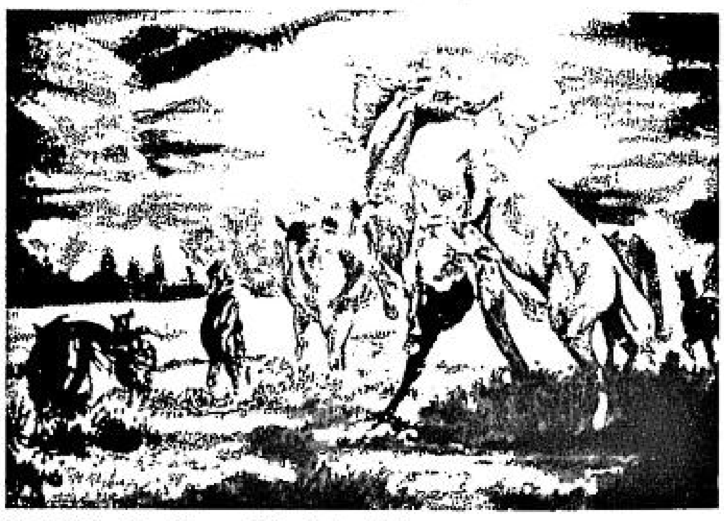
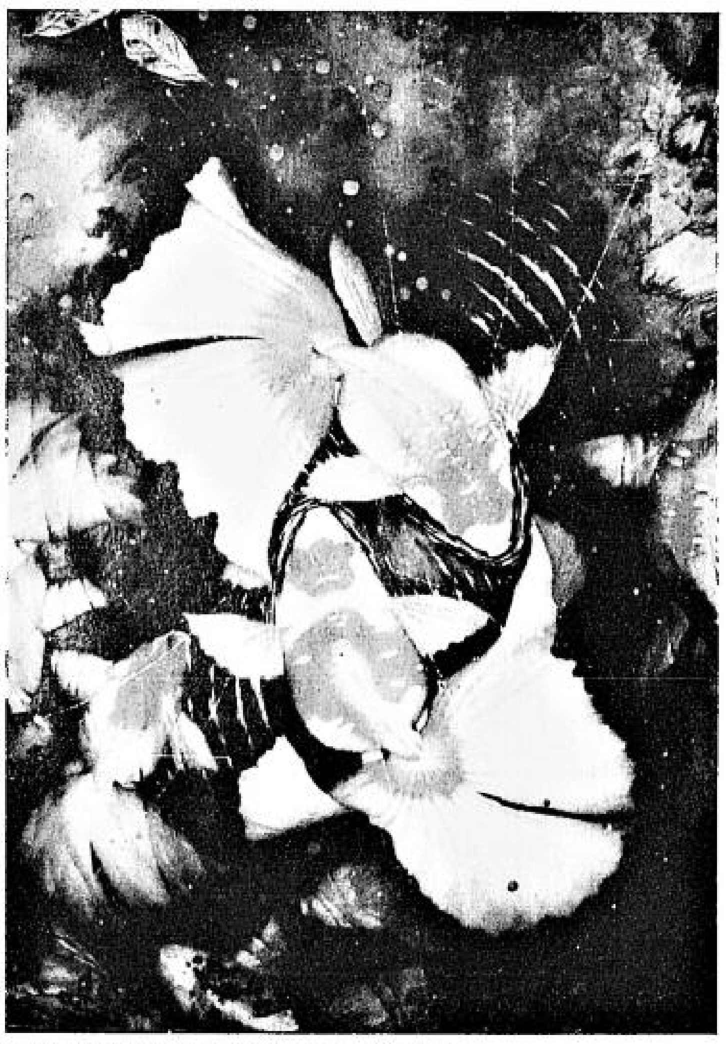

"SABUNGERO," by Roel Obemio


"LORDS of the Range," by Roland Santos


"MEXICAN Sundown," by Leonardo Reyes

A bridge to the past

From page E1

recorded for posterity the name of the pious donor.

Perhaps what is Tayabas' most impressive landmark is its fantastic five-span bridge, the Malagonlong. This was built way back in 1841. It is heartbreakingly beautiful with its graceful arches and finely shaped contours. Right at the center of the span is an inscription celebrating the builders.

Interestingly, Ryan Palad (who really adores this piece of our heritage) showed us that, by looking up at the underside of the bridge, one espies, etched with letters—stonemasons' marks. What a fascinating glimpse of the past—even as the town's elite were setting up inscriptions glorifying their names, the humble masons who did most of the real work were finding ways to quietly leave something of themselves behind.

Unfortunately, the view of this exquisite bridge has been somewhat ruined by a new one built right beside it.

Lunch was at the office of a local NGO, Kabanahaw. Our host was local historian Jun Redor. We were treated to a fantastic feast, mostly prepared by Jun.

On the menu were *pako* salad freshly picked from the forest; *pinais*, which is coconut with *kamamba* leaves and fresh water shrimps; as well as *laing*. In case there were still empty spaces in our stomachs, dessert was a formidable cassava pudding called *budin* by the locals.

After lunch, it was time to head for Sariaya. We paused briefly to see the seal of the Franciscans (two arms intertwined before a cross) carved on a wall.

Sariaya is famous for its beautiful houses. Dominating everything is the fabulous Marquez mansion designed by Andres Luna de San Pedro. Inside the house is one of the most stunning sets of Art Deco furniture that I have ever seen.

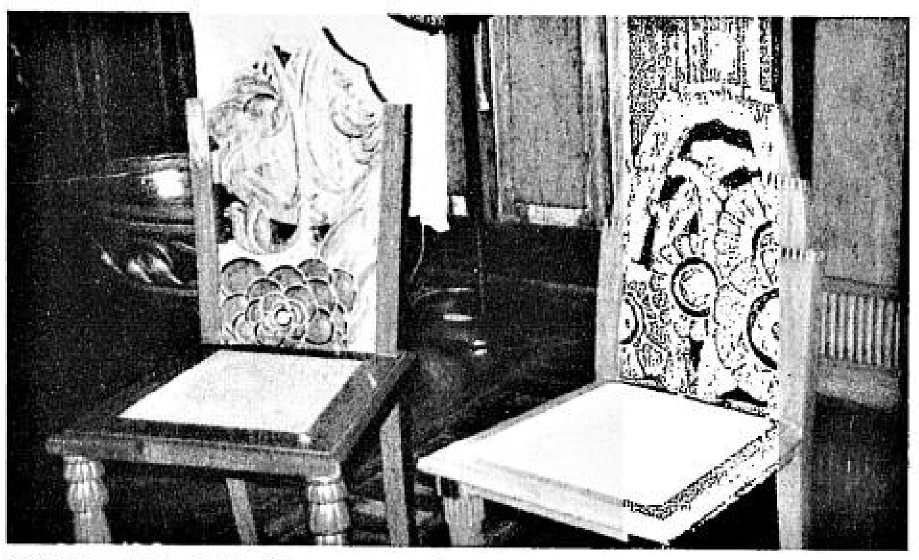
Another beautiful home is the Rodriguez house, which is now a restaurant called Nuon at Ngayon. The owners very graciously allowed us to explore the interiors. There is a lovely mural of a garden scene on one wall. But what is truly breathtaking were the ceilings.

Every room has painted décor overhead that has a different fruit as motif. My favorite is the rambutans! Imagine the creativity and sophistication that went into the decorative elements of these home environments.

Spanish might

Our day ended with dinner at Villa Escudero. There, we reviewed what we saw that day. We all agreed that the highlights were the Tayabas bridge and the Sariaya ceilings.

Ino decided to take advantage of our inability to protest because of exhaustion, to deliver one last lecture. He pointed out that Tayabas was actually the only capital from the Spanish colonial period to be built in the mountains. The Spanish invested a lot in this town—several bridges, a huge church, a town hall, plus three chapels. Why?


ART Deco chairs in the Marquez mansion

Perhaps it was because they had to emphasize Spanish might in contrast to that great power center of Philippine culture—Mt. Banahaw.

For centuries Mt. Banahaw was a sanctuary of Filipinos. Its slopes sheltered rebels, robbers, refugees, outcasts and mystics. It still plays this role today.

It was truly an inspiring lecture, but I am afraid that we all probably fell asleep while listening.

Recalling that fulfilling day, there is one sad note. On my subsequent trip to Tayabas, I was horrified to see a really ugly blue pipe that had been brutally cemented into the fragile structure of Malagonlong Bridge. What a travesty!

Why couldn't we have more respect for this lovely, delicate monument? Why do we continue to wreck our heritage? I hope someone has done something to restore the bridge's integrity.

Every time we deface an old bridge, every time we wreck an ancestral house or tear down the beams of an ancient church, we destroy pieces of ourselves. We smash what are actually little windows into the hearts of our ancestors. We shatter the little messages they have so lovingly left us: marks on stones, fruits delicately painted on ceilings, faces among silver ferns.

When will this destruction stop?

E-mail comments to beartist@filipinaslibrary.org.ph or write to Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City.

Art Attack magazine holds art contest

TO TAP the creative abilities of Filipino students, Marathon Publishing Co. Inc. launches Attacking Art with Fun, a large Art Attack contest.

The contest coincides with the launch of Art Attack Magazine by MPI. Art Attack is the popular show in Disney Channel hosted by Neil Buchanan, who teaches and demonstrates art works and creative activities in the show.

MPI recently got the license to publish Art Attack Magazine from Fun Characters Inc., the marketing licensee of The Walt Disney Co. The Philippine edition will be the first English version of the magazine and will be available in local bookstores by September.

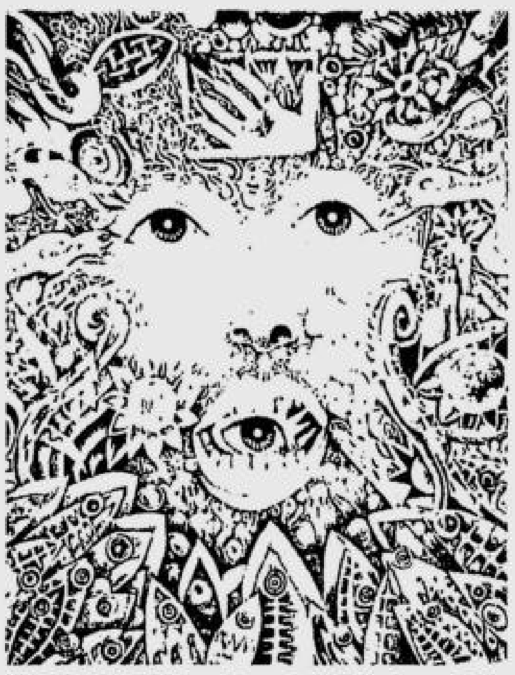
The contest is open to students enrolled in the current school year, ages 7-12. Contestants need to form a team of five who will work on their "art attack." Students must submit application forms for pre-registration.

For the complete set of requirements, call 8930534 or 8401897. The contest requires the participants to use recycled materials.

Some P100,000 worth of prizes are at stake.

The contest will have three phases. The first is the elimination round on Aug. 28 at Museo Pambata. About 30 teams will be chosen to move on to the second phase of the contest in September, where 10 teams will be chosen.

The 10 will compete in the contest on Oct. 2 at Alabang Town Center.


"MGA BULONG sa Panaginip," by Janos Dela Cruz

Where art. . .

From page E4

Even the relatively young artists—figurative artists Dominic Rubio, Bayani Ray Acala and Edwin Tres Reyes, Michael Velasco and Vincent de Pio as well as abstractionists Gino Tioseco and Karina Baluyut—have impressively honed their talents through this two years' working within the gallery system.

The fellowship and the individual flowering are evident in their show for the gallery's second-year anniversary, in which each artist exhibits 3-5 of what they consider their best pieces.

While there are surprises in store for the gallery-goer who has followed the growth of the young artists, the real revelation is Tioseco. His ballerina series in mixed media shows a mature fluidity with his medium.

Ditto with Tres Reyes, now more engaging in his portraits of ballerinas, and Velasco, who has gone a long way from his early landscapes and evolved a more powerfully expressive style.

The show, reveals the steady growth of these artists, thanks to the nurturing atmosphere of the gallery owners coupled with each artist's active pursuit of his calling.

The gallery has also inaugurated its new outlet at the Lower G/F of The Podium, and has initiated a number of innovative shows and tie-ups with musicians and other artists.

Young print master

The Philippine Association of Printmakers has announced its roster of winners in its Annual Open Print Competition. I happen to have taken part in the selection of winners, together with BenCab, Pandy Aviado, Tiny Nuyda and Jess Flores.

During the judging, one lithograph stood out from the rest because of its powerful imagery and postmodern rendering. Titled "Mga Bulong sa Panaginip," the work offers a surreal feast with its surrounding panoply of strange-looking creatures and botanical species. It shows a triad of eyes both in usual location and in the mouth.

The artist, as we found out soon enough, is an 18-year-old Fine Arts student from University of Sto. Tomas, Janos Buenaflor Delacruz, the son of noted artist Fil Delacruz, who, during the awarding ceremonies, admitted he had no inkling his son had sent an entry to the tilt.

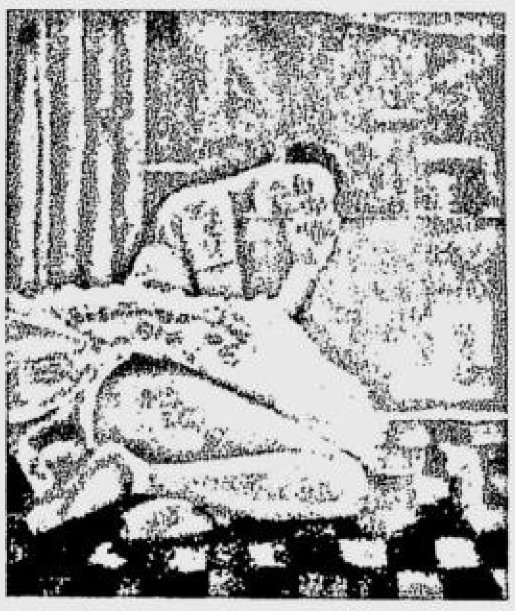
As the grand prize winner in this year's PAP Open Fine Print Competition, the young Delacruz has raised the hopes of aspiring printmakers everywhere. The quality of this year's entries also merited the judges' interest, like myself, who couldn't help but revel at the spirit of experimentation and innovation that prevailed in the works of many participants.

It was a contest where the young, the youthful and the innovative broke new ground, raising the standards of printmaking and enlivening the art scene with their vigor and dynamism.

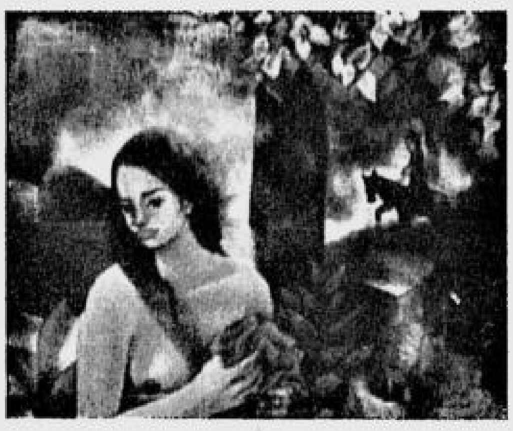
Congratulations to the PAP board led by its president Raul Isidro, Pandy Aviado, Jess Flores, Ambie Abaño and the rest of the officers for adhering to the highest standards of art-making.

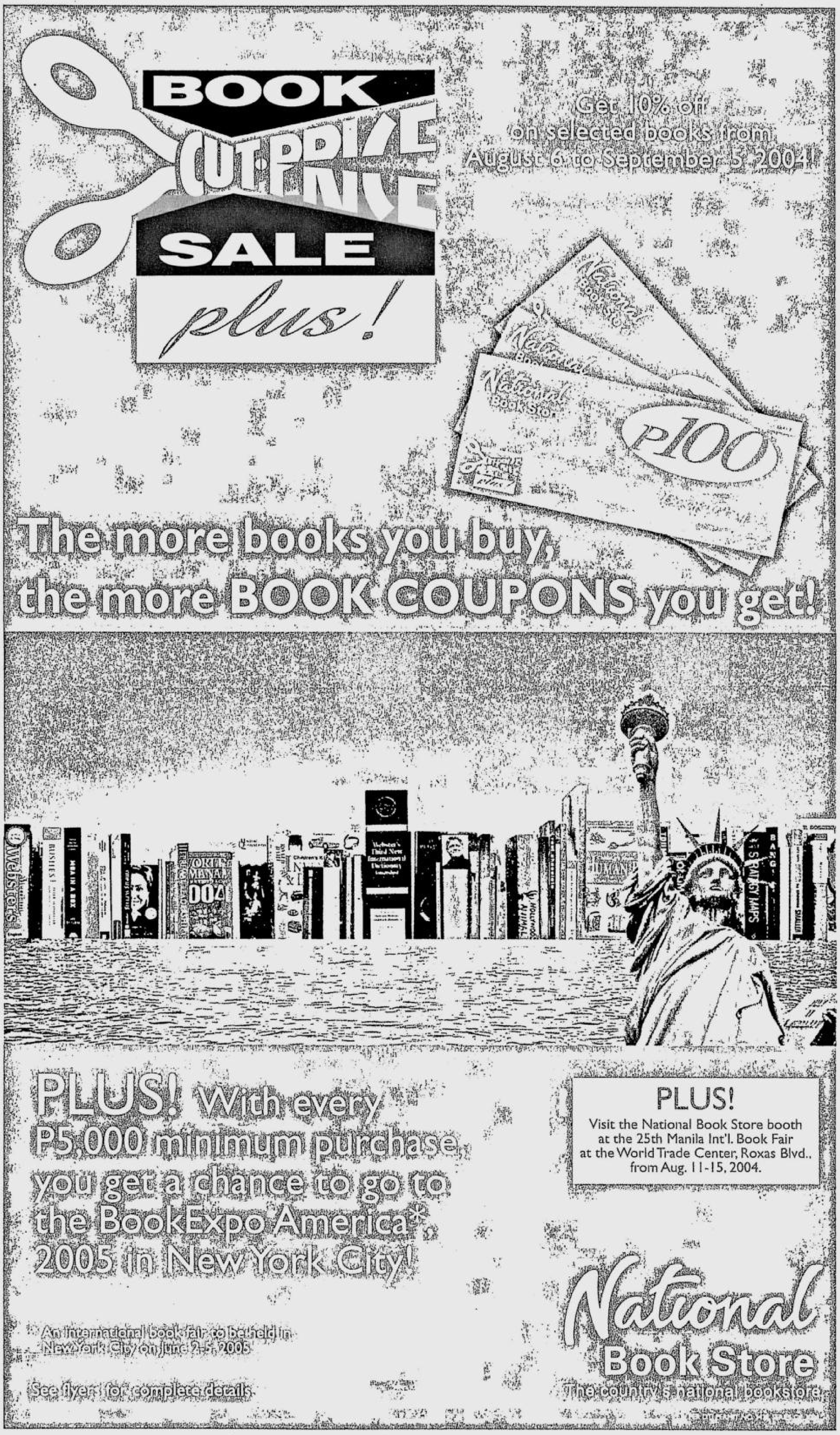
An exhibit of the entries is ongoing until Aug. 10 at the Art Center of the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com


"BALLERINA at Rest," by Edwin Tres Reyes

PAP president Raul Isidro (left) hands out the gold medal and certificate to first prize winner Janos Delacruz, while the guest of honor looks on.


"THE BATH," by Bayani Ray Acala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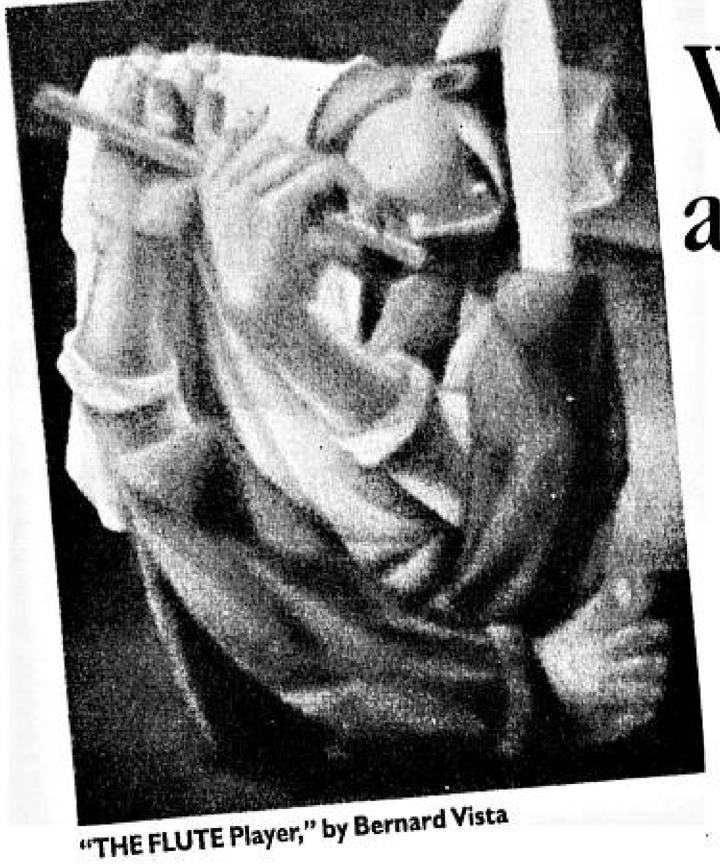


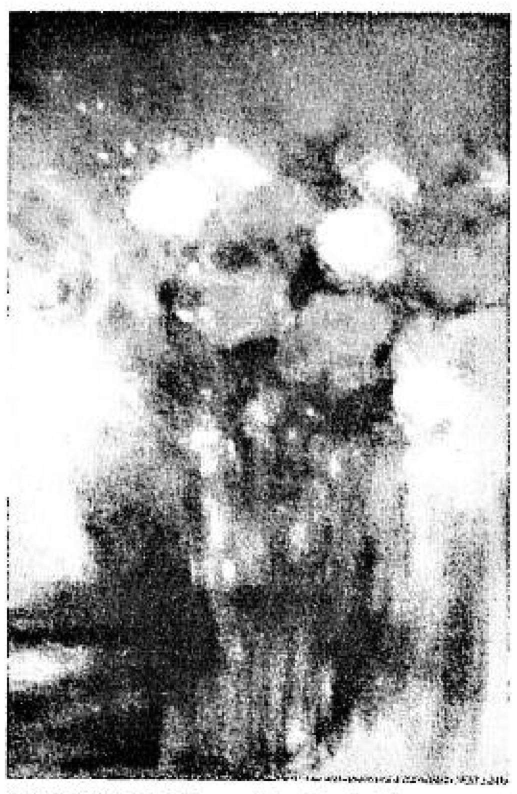
"THE FLUTE Player," by Bernard Vista

Where art and fellowship thrive

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

WHAT better proof of the flourishing art business than the proliferation of galleries today—in malls, hotels, resorts, offices and even homes? Some of them have regrettably closed down, citing bad business or excessive overhead costs, but many others have taken their place.

One gallery that has not merely survived but overcome the crisis is Galerie Joaquin, thanks to the business savvy of its proprietor, Jack Teotico.



"BOUQUET of Roses," by Gig de Pio

A former mediaman, businessman and trade specialist, who has opted to stay put despite his family's decision to move to the United States, Teotico knows the art scene inside out. He has at least 10 years of solid experience writing on the arts, doing PR consultancy work, and engaging himself in the commerce of the art business.

The gallery promotes quality contemporary art. It is open to artists, young and old. It is accessible to its clientele, many of whom are also just starting, like the gallery, to get seriously involved in art.

But the gallery has another asset—a well-knit group of artists who, though a generation apart and with divergent styles, remains deeply committed to art: the Guevarra Group of Artists.

Though the majority is fairly young, the Guevarra Group has veteran artists in its roster such as Juvenal Sanso, Gig de Pio, Andi Cubi, Lydia Velasco, Egai Fernandez, Jonah Salvosa and comebacking ones like Carlo Magno, who began joining the group's sessions only recently.

On-the-spot and landscape painting sessions, lectures and interaction with musicians and fashion designers have helped expose the members to the work of other artists. An unwritten rule is that each artist has to pursue his or her own unique vision.

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The ballad of Juan de la Cruz

THE OBIE Award-winning play, "The Romance of Magno Rubio," returns to Manila in a new Filipino translation under the direction of New York-based artist Loy Arcenas.

Tanghalang Pilipino's 'Ang Romansa ni Magno Rubio' speaks of every person's desire for dignity, happiness and a bit of sparkle in life

By Gibbs Cadiz

IN THEATER, as in show biz, William Goldman's credo—"Nobody knows anything"—speaks the harsh truth.

The best director, playwright, actors and crew may still come up with a flop of a show. The most middling of ensembles, meanwhile, may cough up a sleeper hit somewhere along a lazy, antsy run.

So a wise director is justified to leave it all up to the Fates—while doing all he can, of course, to make sure his show does its damn best to earn the audience's applause.

But when the newspaper headlines unexpectedly make the case for your show, do you ride the noise and milk the symmetry down to its last uncanny parallel? Or do you pull back and let the material speak for itself, trusting only that the audience will get it?

Riding the issue

For a theater company like Tanghalang Pilipino that has to fight for its share of an ever-paltry theater audience, "riding the issue" every now and then to sell its shows should be understandable. TV does it, and most shamelessly. Why not theater?

Well, not if a director like Loy Arcenas can help it.

The New York-based artist, here to direct a Filipino version of the play, "The Romance of Magno Rubio," displays the rare impulse of subtlety against a turn of events that, on its face, demands some form of convenient rabble-rousing and indignation.

"The Romance of Magno Rubio" is the much-lauded Lonnie Carter-Ralph Peña play derived from a classic short story by Filipino writer Carlos Bulosan. The original Ma-Yi Theater production in New York earned eight Obies (the Off-Broadway awards given by the Village Voice), and was staged at the CCP in July last year with a cast of US-based actors.

It is about migrant Filipino farm workers in Depression-era California, and about Magno Rubio in particular, a love-struck dreamer who courts an American woman in faraway Arkansas through letters. He gets duped to send her money and jewelry, only to be disappointed—though not defeated—in the end.

The setting may be 1930s America, but the story, the characters and the reality they inhabit are as current as they come.

"'The Romance of Magno Rubio' develops not just in Magno Rubio's small mind and bursting heart and in the confining world of homesick Pinoys. Its stage is the big oppressive world of racism and cheap labor. The play's era may be the American Depression, but the Magno Rubios are for all time as long as the world economic order stays the same," wrote the INQUIRER's Ma. Ceres Doyo in her review of the play.

As the emblematic figure of Everyman desiring dignity, happiness and a bit of sparkle in his life, Magno Rubio inadvertently finds powerful traction in the recent saga of Angelo de la Cruz, father to eight children and humble truck driver, who went after a dream of riches in a faraway land, only to find himself a tragic pawn in grand geopolitical misadventures and governmental grandstanding.

Ideological bent

But Arcenas, who has himself won an Obie for sustained excellence in theater design, isn't jumping to ramp up the play's ideological rhetoric, despite its obvious emotional pull and potential to draw attention to the show.

"'Magno Rubio' was written by a political writer, but I always look at it as a beautiful short story," he says.

"The last part of the play can be seen as a political tract, but the story is combustible enough that I've instructed the actors to play it simply," he adds.

For Arcenas, it's simply respecting the play's ability to speak the power of its truth without overreaching.

"This play is really about the Filipino diaspora. One-eighth of our population is OFWs. So

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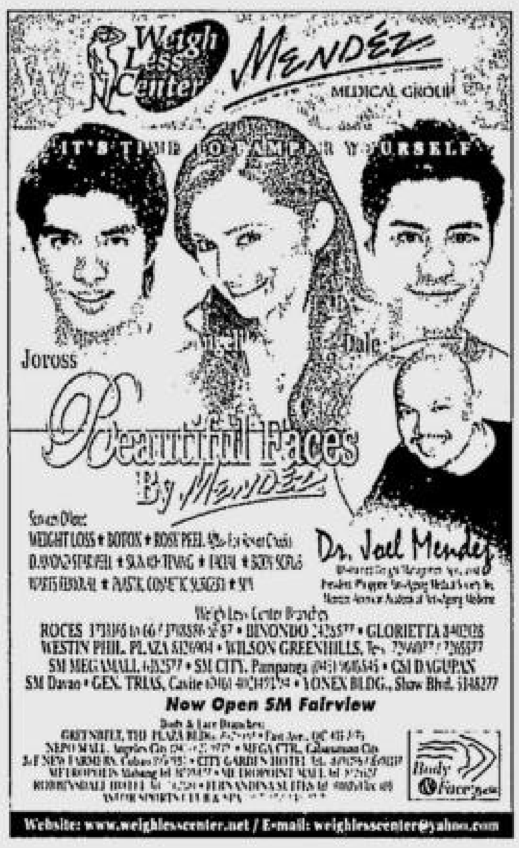

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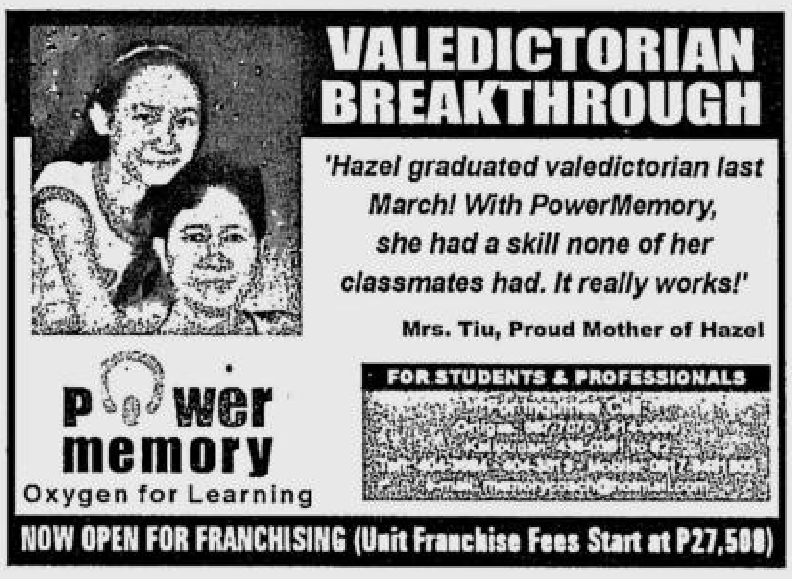

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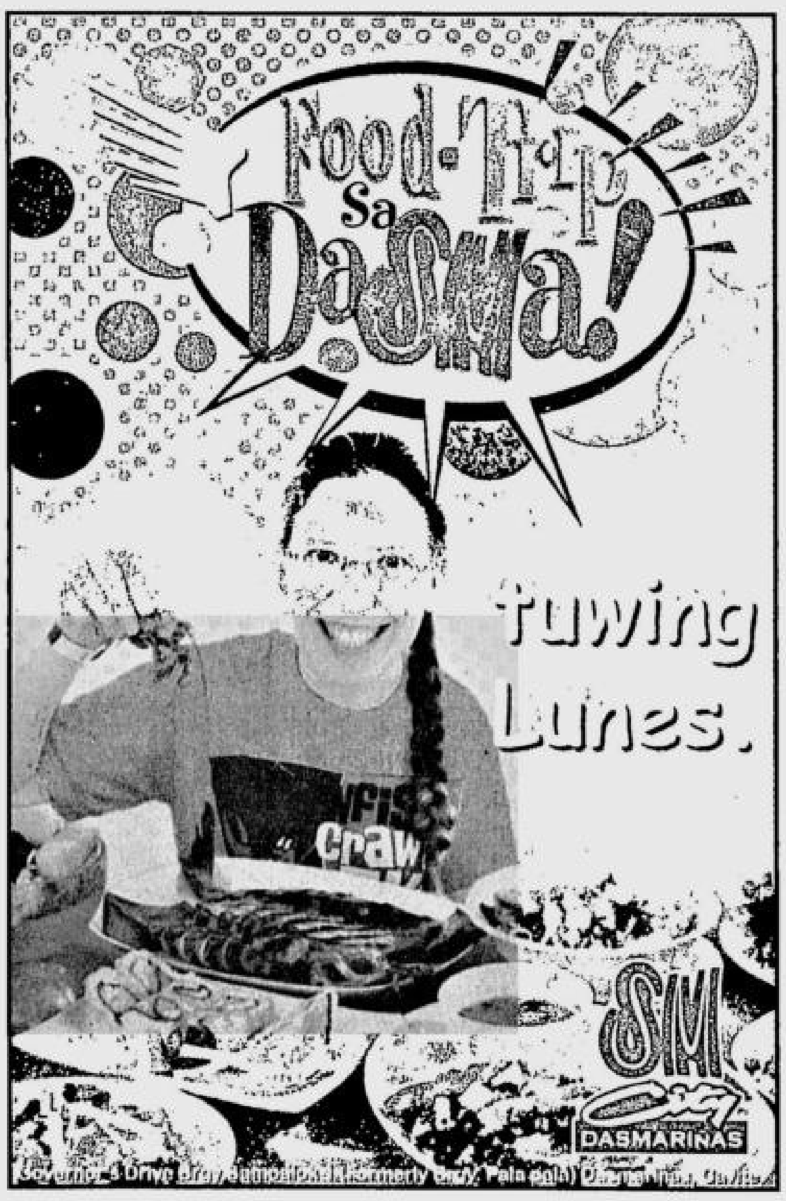

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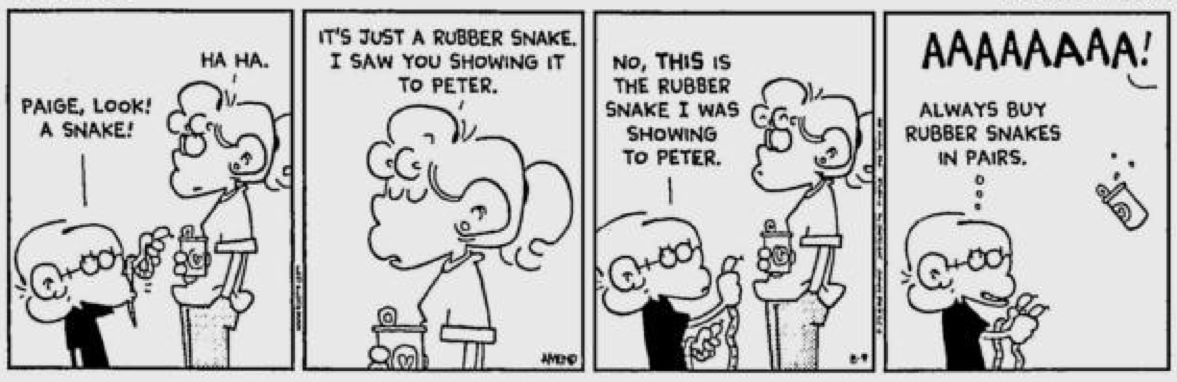
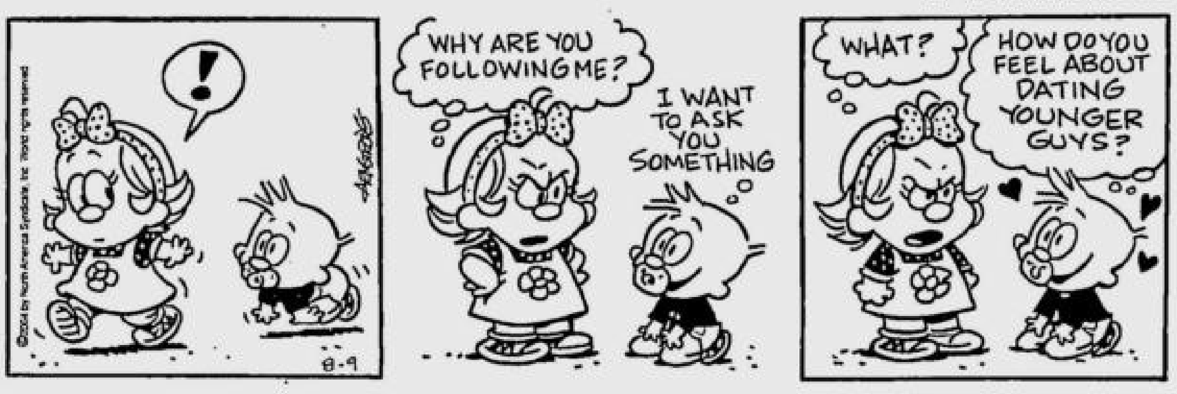
BY BILL AMEND


PAIGE, LOOK! A SNAKE!
HA HA.
IT'S JUST A RUBBER SNAKE. I SAW YOU SHOWING IT TO PETER.
NO, THIS IS THE RUBBER SNAKE I WAS SHOWING TO PETER.
AAAAAAAA!
ALWAYS BUY RUBBER SNAKES IN PAIRS.
AMEND
8-9

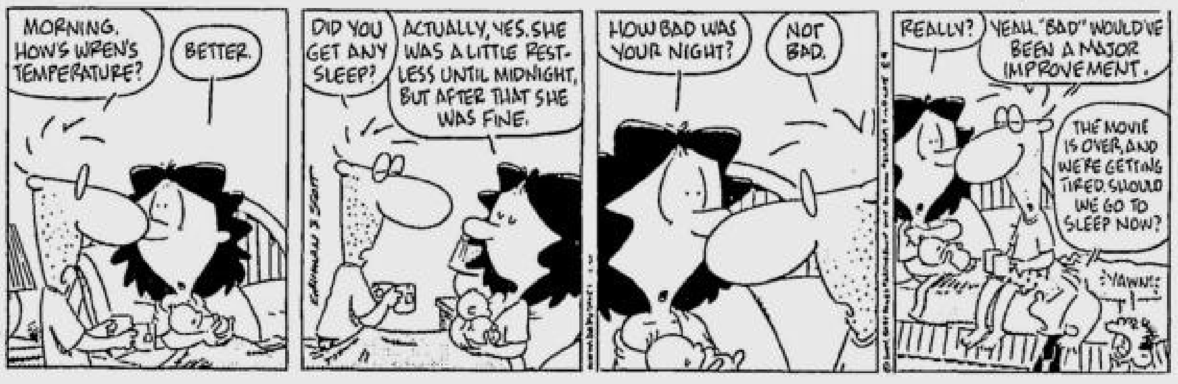
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


!
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?
I WANT TO ASK YOU SOMETHING
WHAT?
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT DATING YOUNGER GUYS?
ARMSTRONG
8-9

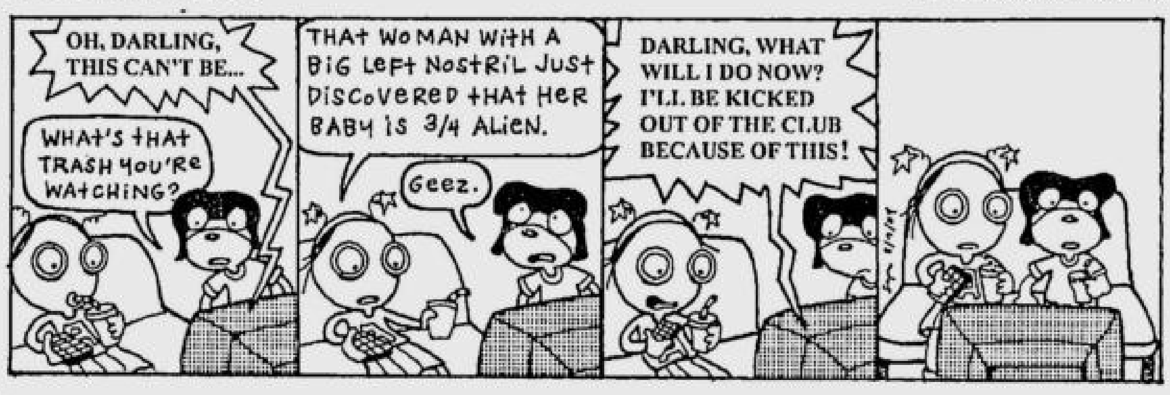
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MORNING. HOW'S WREN'S TEMPERATURE?
BETTER.
DID YOU GET ANY SLEEP?
ACTUALLY, YES. SHE WAS A LITTLE RESTLESS UNTIL MIDNIGHT, BUT AFTER THAT SHE WAS FINE.
HOW BAD WAS YOUR NIGHT?
NOT BAD.
REALLY?
YEAH. "BAD" WOULD'VE BEEN A MAJOR IMPROVEMENT.
THE MOVIE IS OVER, AND WE'RE GETTING TIRED. SHOULD WE GO TO SLEEP NOW?
YAWN!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


OH, DARLING, THIS CAN'T BE...
WHAT'S THAT TRASH YOU'RE WATCHING?
THAT WOMAN WITH A BIG LEFT NOSTRIL JUST DISCOVERED THAT HER BABY IS 3/4 ALIEN.
Geez.
DARLING, WHAT WILL I DO NOW? I'LL BE KICKED OUT OF THE CLUB BECAUSE OF THIS!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very generous and supportive of others. People depend on you. You're helpful to others because you understand what makes people tick, plus you have a caring heart. Despite your outward flamboyance, you're very sensitive and thoughtful. Major changes (as significant as in 1995) await you this year.

Birthdate of: Sam Elliott, actor; Gillian Anderson, actress; Whitney Houston, singer/actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You feel unusually independent at work today, especially as the day wears on. That's why you won't appreciate anyone telling you what to do.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Parents should be cautious with children today. Minor mishaps and unexpected events could cause little accidents. Keep your eyes open.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Minor surprises on the home front or within your family are likely today. Stay light on your feet. Be extra patient with family members, because people are a bit touchy as well.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel defiant for some reason today. Either you want to win an argument, or you might even want to start one. Try to nip this in the bud right away.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Watch out for impulse shopping today. You know you like to throw your money around. (But you at least want a good value for it!)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might feel restless, irritable and distracted today. Be careful that this doesn't cause an accident. Be more patient with others, because you have a short fuse just now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Computer crashes or other surprises change your routine at work today. Just expect the unexpected, and go with the flow. (That's what you're supposed to do when you're grown-up.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Flirtations from unlikely sources might surprise you. It's nice to be admired, but you're not sure about this one. Simply disregard whatever bothers you. This is minor and insignificant.

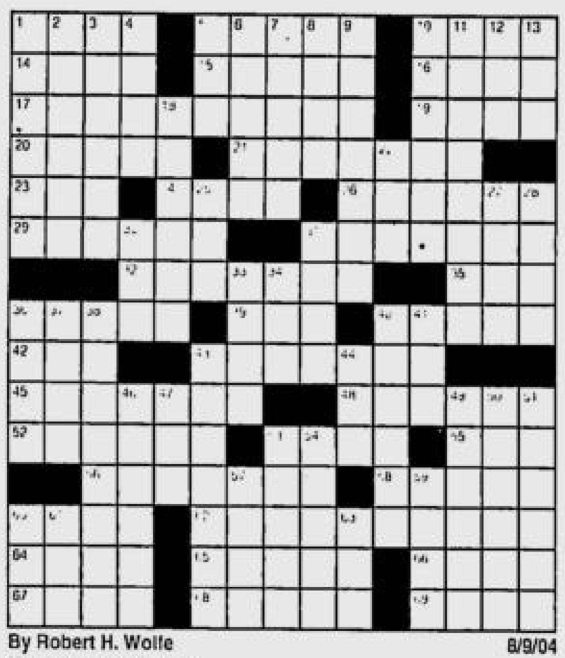
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Because you feel very independent today, you don't want to be bossed around by anyone. You don't like it any day of the week—but especially not today!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Something unusual or unconventional intrigues you now. In fact, you might suddenly become obsessed with it. (It's that it's so different and fascinating, it's irresistible!)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Someone might surprise you by giving you a treat or picking up the tab today. Don't get proud or anything. Just say "thank you." (Never look a gift horse in the mouth.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Use your smooth diplomacy to keep things on an even keel today with others. Communications are difficult, because people are inclined to be stubborn today. (Including you!)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY
8/9/04

ACROSS

1 Madrid house
5 Plow man
10 Moved quickly
14 Higher than
15 Computer letters
16 Med. care grps.
17 Elite military group
19 Poetic nights
20 Joel and Jennifer
21 Swarming
23 PC key
24 Take note of
26 Set up tents
29 Passed gossip
31 Native to a certain area
32 British soldier, once
35 Wee crawler
36 Serrated
39 Varnish ingredient
40 Great dogs
42 Actress Thurman
43 Flounces
45 Jack or Patrick
48 Plays charades
52 Con man
53 __ avis
55 Sturdy tree
56 Wardrobe fill
58 Family member
60 Some vaccines
62 Old tape choice
64 Cafeteria carrier
65 Highland landowner
66 Distance unit
67 "Only Time" singer
68 Swelling
69 Dump ending

DOWN

1 Old fogy
2 Opposed
3 Pick out
4 Pretentious
5 X-wd. clue
6 Overact
7 Like some seals
8 Paella ingredient
9 Constituent
10 From that place
11 1971 Heston film, with "The"
12 Silver of "Timecop"
13 Capital of Senegal?
18 Actress Judd
22 Not Dem. or Rep.
25 Roush or Byrnes
27 Planted bomb
28 Fractions of 100: abbr.
30 Assn.
31 Apiece
33 Ali, once
34 W. Hemisphere grp.
36 Actress Dench
37 Sermon sign-off
38 Electromagnetic radiation
40 Generator
41 Botanist Gray
43 Within view
44 Gas: pref.
46 Melonlike fruit
47 The Racer's Edge
49 Choose a side
50 Hacienda hot meal
51 Boitano or Button
53 Knot anew
54 Warning
57 __ my lips!
59 Weapons
60 Sault __ Marie
61 Osprey's cousin
63 Drug-testing grp.

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

S	I	S	T	I	N	E	■	G	R	I	P	P	E	D
E	N	T	I	C	E	D	■	R	E	V	E	R	S	E
S	T	R	E	E	T	S	■	E	L	E	G	I	S	T
T	O	E	■	■	■	■	P	A	Y	■	■	M	A	E
E	N	S	I	L	A	G	E	S	■	O	B	E	Y	S
T	E	S	T	I	M	O	N	Y	■	D	A	V	I	T
■	■	■	S	T	O	I	C	S	■	E	R	A	S	E
T	H	E	■	■	S	N	I	P	S	■	■	L	T	D
R	I	N	S	E	■	G	L	O	O	M	Y	■	■	■
E	T	H	E	L	■	P	S	O	R	I	A	S	I	S
S	H	A	W	S	■	L	I	N	E	A	M	E	N	T
P	E	N	■	■	B	A	N	■	■	■	■	S	U	E
A	R	C	H	A	I	C	■	C	A	R	F	A	R	E
S	T	E	E	P	L	E	■	B	L	O	O	M	E	D
S	O	R	R	E	L	S	■	S	E	E	R	E	S	S

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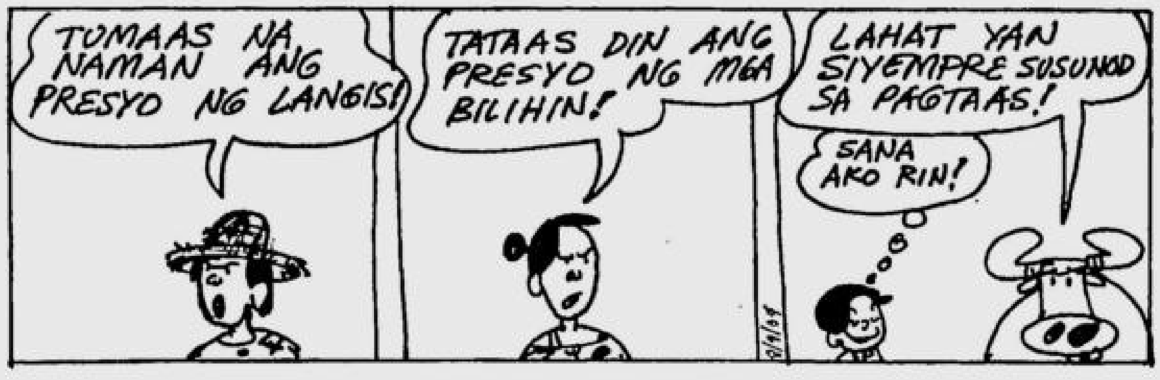
8/9/04

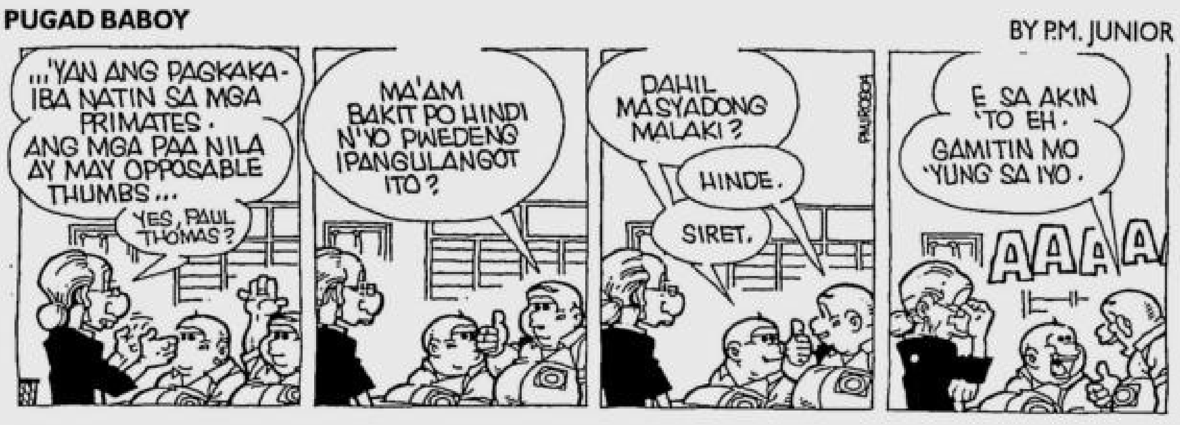
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


TUMAAS NA NAMAN ANG PRESYO NG LANGIS!
TATAAS DIN ANG PRESYO NG MGA BILIHIN!
LAHAT YAN SIYEMPRE SUSUNOD SA PAGTAAS!
SANA AKO RIN!

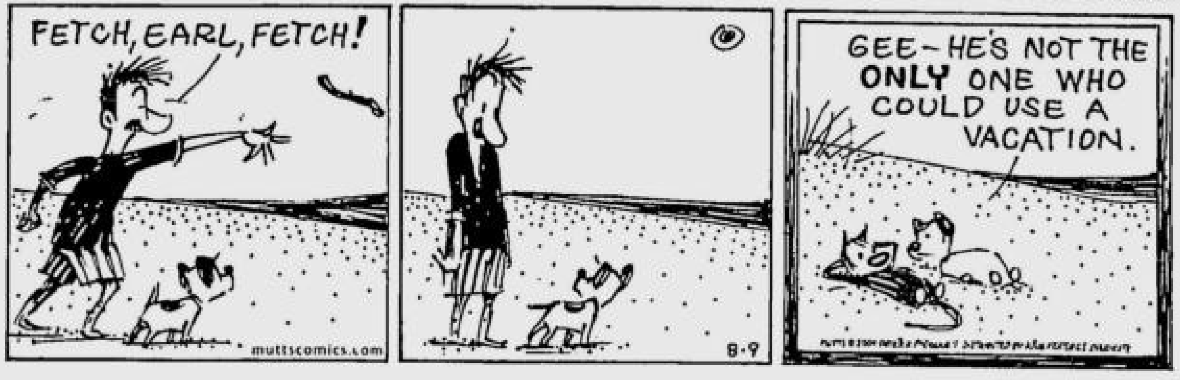
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


...'YAN ANG PAGKAKAIBA NATIN SA MGA PRIMATES. ANG MGA PAA NILA AY MAY OPPOSABLE THUMBS...
YES, PAUL THOMAS?
MA'AM BAKIT PO HINDI N'YO PWEDENG IPANGULANGOT ITO?
DAHIL MASYADONG MALAKI?
HINDE.
SIRET.
E SA AKIN 'TO EH. GAMITIN MO 'YUNG SA IYO.
AAAA

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

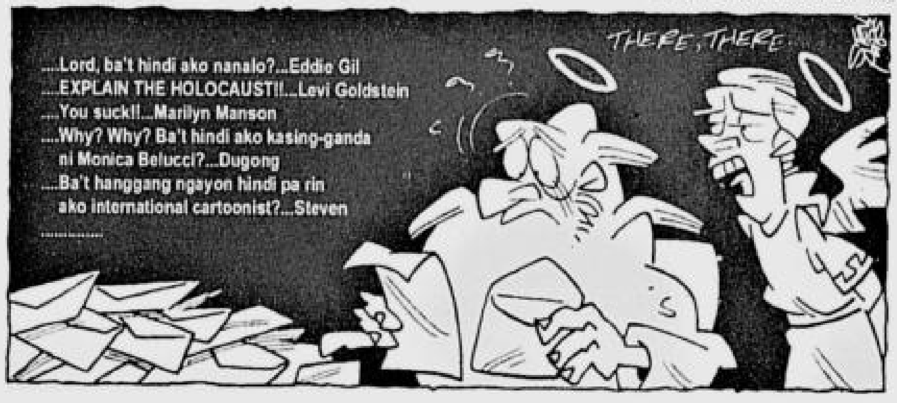

FETCH, EARL, FETCH!
muttscomics.com
8-9
GEE – HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD USE A VACATION.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

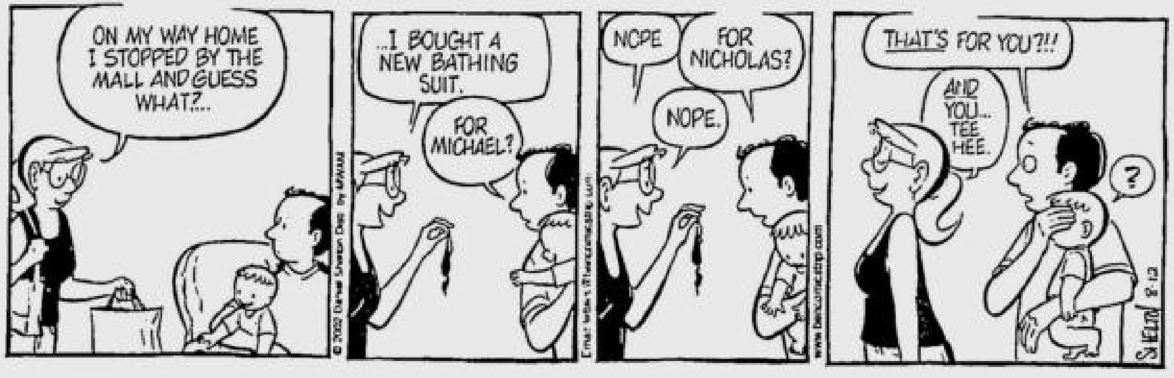
Q: WHAT IF GOD WAS ONE OF US?

A: MARAMI SYANG HATE MAILS NA MATATANGGAP


....Lord, ba't hindi ako nanalo?...Eddie Gil
....EXPLAIN THE HOLOCAUST!!...Levi Goldstein
....You suck!!...Marilyn Manson
....Why? Why? Ba't hindi ako kasing-ganda ni Monica Belucci?...Dugong
....Ba't hanggang ngayon hindi pa rin ako international cartoonist?...Steven
....
THERE, THERE...

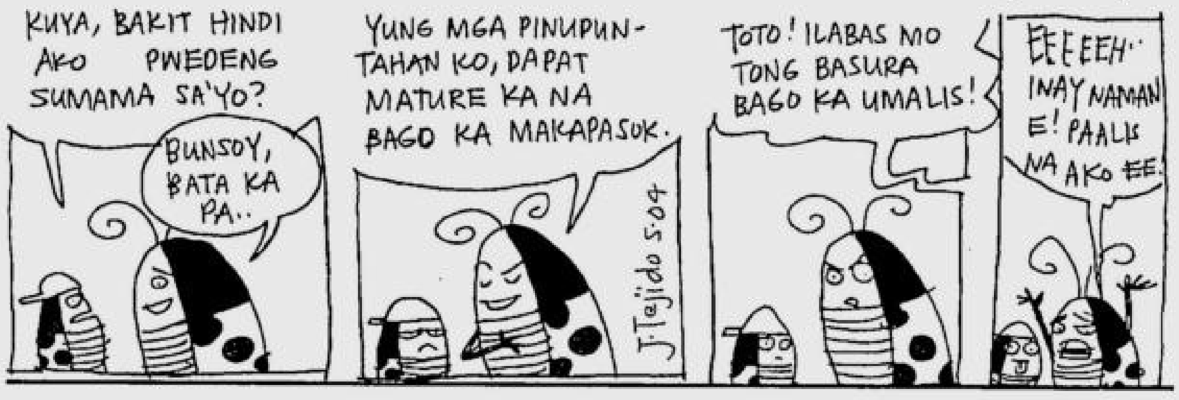
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ON MY WAY HOME I STOPPED BY THE MALL AND GUESS WHAT?...
...I BOUGHT A NEW BATHING SUIT.
FOR MICHAEL?
NOPE
FOR NICHOLAS?
NOPE.
THAT'S FOR YOU?!!
AND YOU... TEE HEE.
?
SHELTON 8-13

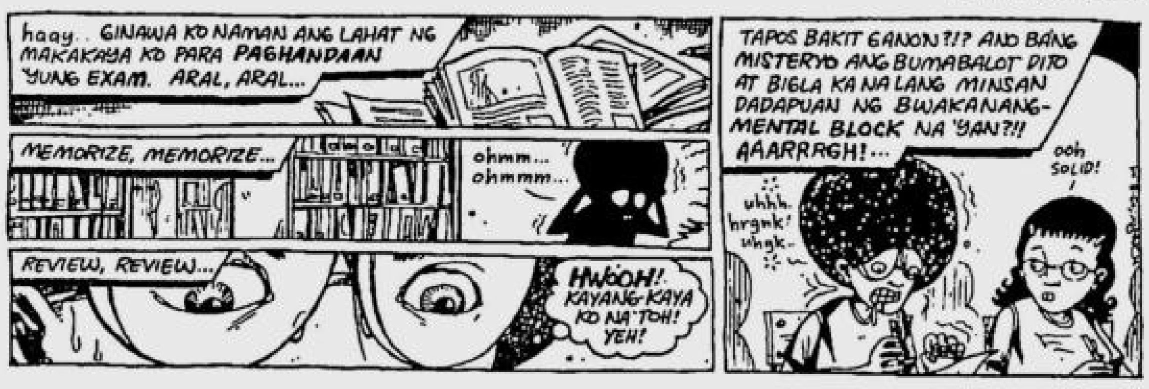
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KUYA, BAKIT HINDI AKO PWEDENG SUMAMA SA'YO?
BUNSOY, BATA KA PA..
YUNG MGA PINUPUNTAHAN KO, DAPAT MATURE KA NA BAGO KA MAKAPASOK.
J. Tejido 5.04
TOTO! ILABAS MO TONG BASURA BAGO KA UMALIS!
EEEEEH.. INAY NAMAN E! PAALIS NA AKO EE.

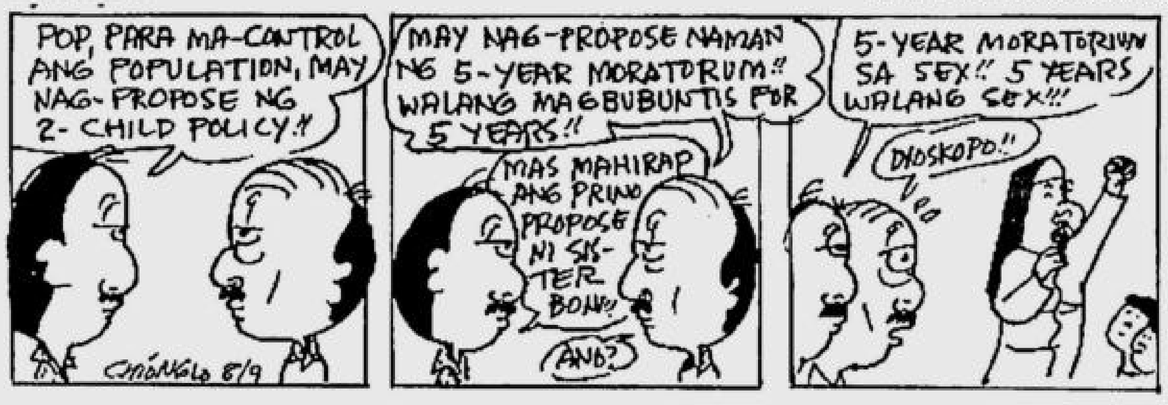
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haay.. GINAWA KO NAMAN ANG LAHAT NG MAKAKAYA KO PARA PAGHANDAAN 'YUNG EXAM. ARAL, ARAL...
MEMORIZE, MEMORIZE...
ohmm... ohmmm...
REVIEW, REVIEW...
HWOOH! KAYANG-KAYA KO NA 'TOH! YEH!
TAPOS BAKIT GANON?!? ANO BANG MISTERYO ANG BUMABALOT DITO AT BIGLA KA NA LANG MINSAN DADAPUAN NG BWAKANANG-MENTAL BLOCK NA 'YAN?!! AAARRRGH!...
uhhh. hrgnk! uhgk..
ooh SOLID!

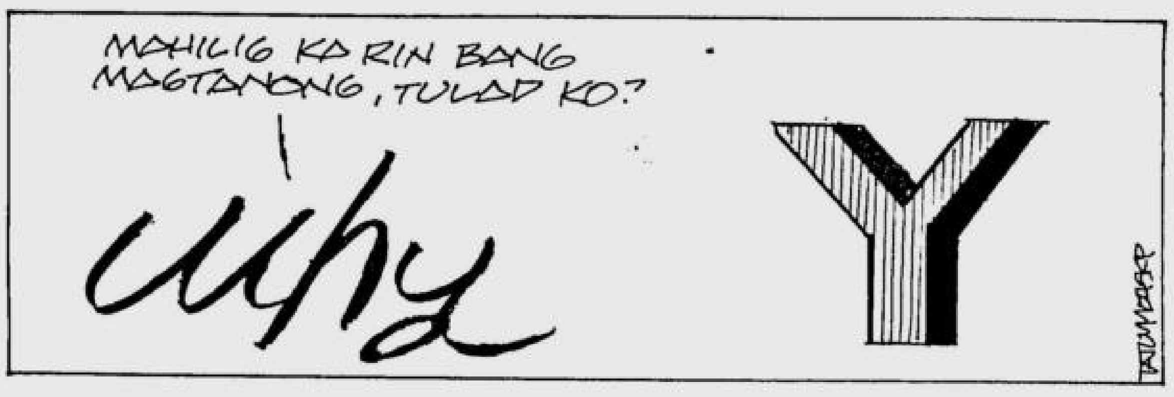
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


POP, PARA MA-CONTROL ANG POPULATION, MAY NAG-PROPOSE NG 2-CHILD POLICY!!
CHIONGLO 8/9
MAY NAG-PROPOSE NAMAN NG 5-YEAR MORATORUM!! WALANG MAGBUBUNTIS FOR 5 YEARS!!
MAS MAHIRAP ANG PRINOPOSE NI SISTER BOH!!
AND?
5-YEAR MORATORIUM SA SEX!! 5 YEARS WALANG SEX!!!
DIOSKOPO!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


MAHILIG KA RIN BANG MAGTANONG, TULAD KO?
why
Y
TATUMBIAR

THE MEN of Tanghalang Pilipino's "Ang Romansa ni Magno Rubio": Paolo O'Hara (Claro), Paolo Rodriguez (Magno Rubio), Randy Villarama (Atoy understudy), Roeder Camañag (Nick); (seated) Soliman Cruz (Prudencio), Noel Rayos (Atoy/Clarabelle)

The ballad of Juan de la Cruz

From page F1

while we are making a big, big effort to remain faithful to the play (in terms of milieu, for example), inadvertently it finds its own slant."

"'Magno Rubio' in itself is social commentary," he stresses. "We didn't have to work hard at it."

What the cast is working hard at is speaking the Filipino lines, which are in verses. Playing Magno Rubio is Paolo Rodriguez, with Noel Rayos, Roeder Camanag, Soliman Cruz and Paolo O'Hara completing the ensemble.

"Making verse come alive is difficult," says Arcenas. "Otherwise, they're just beautiful sounds. So the actors have to make it as real and conversational as possible."

Arcenas, still fluent (that is, accent-less) in the native tongue despite decades of living in New York, marvels at how beautiful Filipino can sound.

"It's very onomatopoeic, very descriptive," he explains. "When you say 'ang *liit-liit*,' it sounds so much different from 'very small.' In this play (now called 'Ang Romansa ni Magno Rubio'), the language comes alive."

The original version of the play, while in English, also had dollops of Filipino in it. But the foreign audiences didn't seem to mind.

"A Mexican writer approached me after our show in Chicago and said she didn't have to think much to realize that the play is really everybody's story," says Arcenas. "To me, that's a great compliment."

Goldman may be wrong. Audiences do know something—a good play—when they see one.

"Ang Romansa ni Magno Rubio" runs Aug. 13-29 at Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino, CCP. Call 8323661 or 8321125 locals 1620/1621.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

DREAMER or fool? "Magno Rubio's" setting may be 1930s America, but the reality it portrays is as current as they come.

Vibeca stages dance recital

VIBECA Danskul, a new studio put up by seasoned ballet performers, recently staged "Dance, Dance, Dance 2004!" at the UP Abelardo Hall.

Young ballet students, from 4-11 years old, as well as teenagers and adult performers mounted their first stage performance.

The first act involved Beginners Ballet I and 2, Children's Ballet I and 2, and adult beginners in the Ballet for Everyone class, performing character dances from the classic "Swan Lake" Act III.

The Beginners and Children's Ballet students were choreographed by Nina Habulan, a graduate of the dancing course of the UP College of Music, and assisted by Clarissa Mijares and Therese Arcinas.

Habulan also choreographed the Spanish dance, Neopolitan dance, and Hungarian and Princesses in the second act of "Swan Lake."

The Ballet for Everyone Class meanwhile danced the Mazurka and the Russian Dance, also from the "Swan" as re-staged by Anatoli Panasiukov of the Philippine Ballet Theater, a cum laude graduate of the Bolshoi Ballet School in Moscow.

The second act, Polynesian Dance, was re-staged by Vio Lopez for the Kids and Adult Polynesian students. Lopez was a dance instructor and dancer of the Pacifica Polynesian Cultural Foundation, Inc.

The Street Grooves part had teenagers dancing to the hip music of Missy Elliot. The class is handled by Neil Cambay, a former company member of Ballet Philippines.

"Heartburn" was a jazzy and edgy rendition by teenage and adult dancers as choreographed by April Toledo, who handles the Jazz class for the school.

For the Modern Ballet classes, the first segment "Reality Bites" proved it was an improvisation choreographed by Habulan who joined the number herself. Another faculty member, Gerald Mercado, performed solo the haunting song by Joni Mitchell, "Both Sides Now."

"REALITY Bites," an improvised number by Nina Habulan and Vibeca faculty members

Vibeca director Katrina Santos-Mercado praised the performances. "The students have shown confidence and joy in their dancing, and truly this is what dancing is all about," she said.

Virginia "Gie" Lagula-Bote, a former member of the Bayanihan Dance Company of the Philippines and Pacifica Cultural Dance Company, and founding president of Vibeca Danskul, said Vibeca intends to hold mini-recitals every six months to give an opportunity to students to experience the joy of dancing at the earliest possible time.

Vibeca Danskul is at G/L, AMO Bldg., 92 New York St, Quezon City. Call 9124283, 9126781 or 9957441.

YOUNG ballerinas perform a Spanish number from the classic "Swan Lake."

Lourd de Veyra and Radioactive Sago Project in spoken-word performance

LOURD de Veyra

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies will hold the first of its Associate's Lecture Series for the year with "Auratorio: Exploring New Dimensions of the Spoken Word and Re-envisioning the Poet of Now," a lecture/performance by Lourd de Veyra to be held on Aug. 13, 6 p.m., at CCWS Lecture Rooms, G/L, AB-Commerce Bldg., UST, España Manila.

"Auratorio" attempts a new look at poetry recital through the use of multimedia elements, specifically live free-form jazz/avant garde instrumentation with video installations. The event is an experiment in combining various sensory impressions, in the hopes of formulating a new method of presenting poetry to 21st-century audiences.

De Veyra has published two collections of poetry. Among the highlights of the performance is a reinterpretation of poems by De Veyra's mentors Ophelia Dimalanta, Cirilo F. Bautista, Jose Lacaba, to name a few. He will be backed up by members of the Radioactive Sago Project, a spoken word jazz outfit which De Veyra fronts.

"Auratorio" is open to the public. Call 7313101 local 8281.

FEU holds all-Filipino music concert

THE FAR Eastern University, through the President's Committee on Culture, celebrates Buwan ng Wika with the concert of the Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble of the University of Santo Tomas, Aug. 12, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. at the FEU Auditorium in Sampaloc, Manila.

The multimedia production will be highlighted by a variety of Filipino songs rendered by the UST Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble under the direction of professor Eugene A. de los Santos.

The repertoire includes Kasilag's "Purihin si Yahweh"; San Pedro's "Magsiawit Kayo sa Panginoon"; Al Buenaventura's "Alay sa Iyo," "Maawaing Ina"; Abelardo's "Nasaan Ka Irog" and "Bituing Marikit"; and Santiago's "Pakiusap." The second part features folk songs like "Pasigin," "Waway" and "Inday Sa Balitaw." OPM (original Filipino songs) are Moy Ortiz's "Ilog Pasiglahin" and "Muling Aawit ang Pasig"; Velasco's "Sana'y Maghintay ang Walang Hanggan" and Simon's "Isang Dugo, Isang Lahi, Isang Musika."

The UST Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble won the grand prize in the 1st Pasig River Heritage Competition and the 1st Pagcor Christmas Caroling Festival. UST Liturgikon is also the recipient of the 2004 St. Dominic de Guzman Award for exemplary group performance.

Professor De los Santos finished his master's at the Elizabeth University of Music in Hiroshima, Japan, where he pursued his doctorate studies. A professor at the UST Conservatory, he is also the choirmaster of the Tiples de Sto. Domingo.

The concert will have the special participation of the FEU Dance Troupe.

Outdoor dance performance

PONDEROSA Leisure Farms, an exclusive residential garden village in Silang, Cavite, was the venue recently for Dance of the Roses, a performance of music and movement by dancer-choreographer Myra Beltran of Dance Forum.

Beltran performed "Song," an excerpt from Star Maiden, to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. It was followed by one of her recent choreography, "Con Furia," to Hungarian composer Bela Bartok's String Quartet No. 4. Beltran was joined by Mara Arcilla in this number.

Those who attended the performance were treated to a Spanish buffet prepared by Las Paellas, with live Spanish music for background.

Guests also went on a garden tour visiting the El Refugio theme garden, which has a teahouse and kiosk. Each visitor brought home a blooming red rose courtesy of Ponderosa Leisure Farms.

Beltran has been affiliated with the Ballet of Oldenburg in Germany, Ballet of Theatre Phristina in Yugoslavia, Ballet Philippines and the Lab Projekt Philippines. She was cited by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts for her work "Alab ni Haraya."

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MYRA Beltran moving to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach; (left) "Con Furia" performance of Beltran with Mara Arcilla

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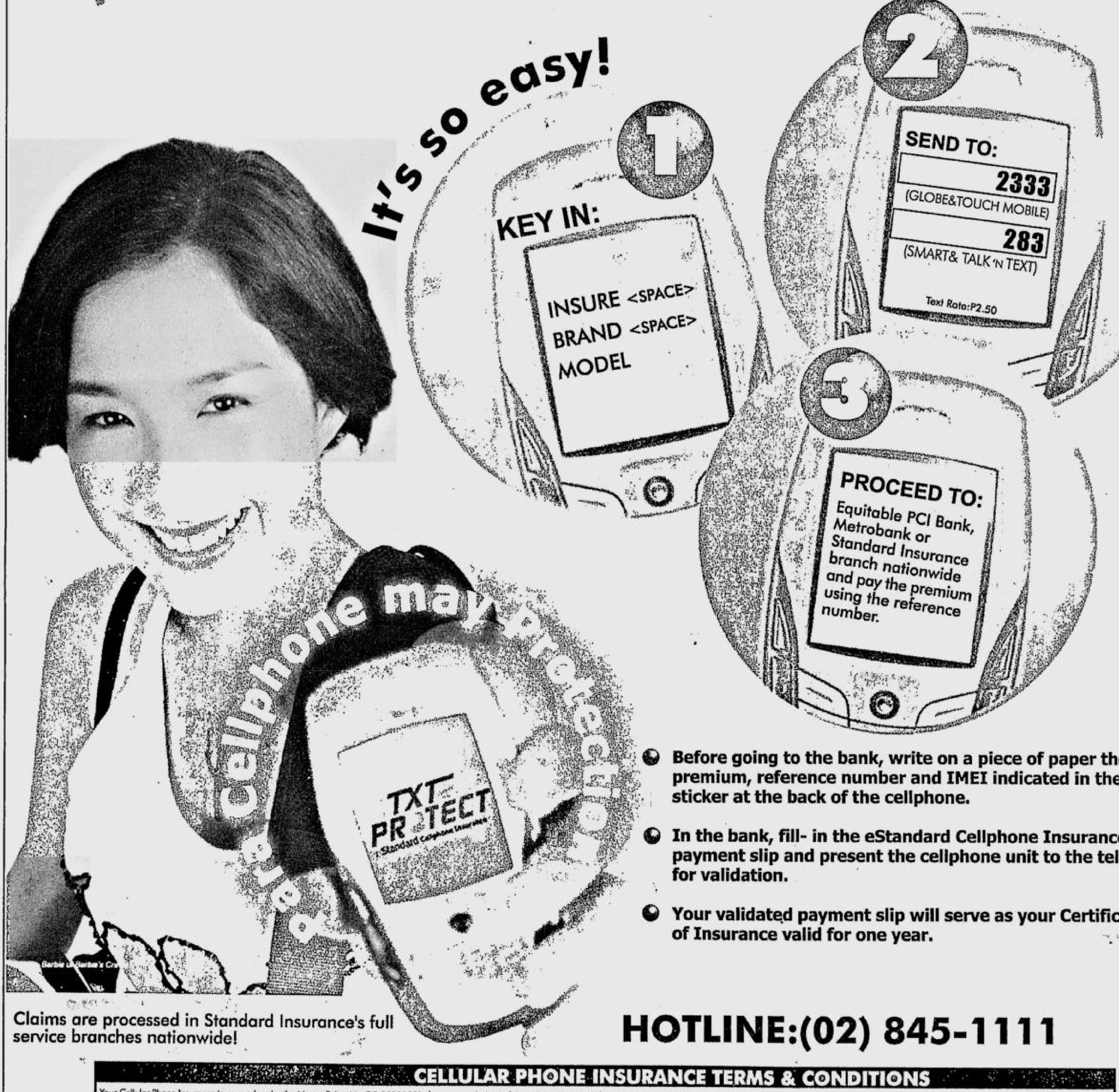
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     - b. Bring the damage unit
     - c. Payment Slip and/or Official Receipt
     - d. Accomplish Claims Report Form
     - e. Any requested documentation to support the claim
   - B. Loss Claim:
     - a. Proper Identifications
     - b. Police Report & /or excerpt from the blotter (reported within 24 hours from the time of accident)
     - c. Payment slip and/or Official Receipt
     - d. Accomplish Claims Report Form within 48 hours.
     - e. Any Proof of ownership
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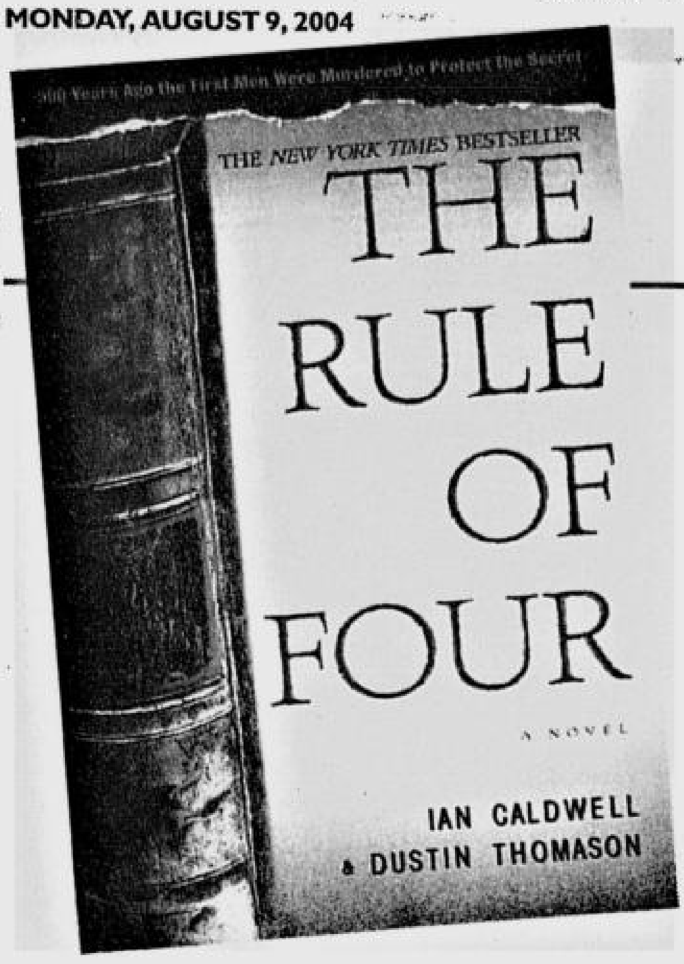
Look at what 'Da Vinci Code' has done

The book is more about a star-crossed college student's sentimental coming of age than the murderous mysteries inside an ancient book


500 Years Ago the First Men Were Murdered to Protect the Secret
THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
THE RULE OF FOUR
A NOVEL
IAN CALDWELL
& DUSTIN THOMASON

"The Rule of Four"
By Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason
The Dial Press, New York
2004, 368 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

REVIEW

EVER since Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" catapulted to the zenith of the bestseller lists, readers have been searching for the next "Da Vinci"—that is, another novel featuring historical mind-benders and artistic puzzles, one that melds fact and fiction into an irresistible literary conundrum.

The discovery closest to that landmark novel so far has been "The Rule of Four," a novel by younger authors Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason that explorés similar territory than "Da Vinci," but is also remarkably different in many ways. Dubbed "Da Vinci Lite" by some, "The Rule of Four" is actually three different stories.

The first story revolves around the mystery of the "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," a Renaissance document that has baffled researchers for ages. At its heart is the identity of its true author, a man named Francesco Colonna, who is either a monk or an aristocrat. But it is the puzzles inside the "Hypnerotomachia's" text and illustrations that have seduced and driven so many men to extremes.

The second story revolves around the life of one Thomas "Tom" Sullivan, a Princeton senior whose late father had become obsessed with the "Hypnerotomachia" until the elder Sullivan's death. Pulled to and away from the book, Tom is simply trying to get to graduation somehow, hurdling the challenges of Princeton, both academic and otherwise. Aside from his own thesis on Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," Sullivan gets drawn into helping his friend, Paul, decode the beloved and accursed "Hypnerotomachia." But this growing obsession not only challenges Sullivan's relationships with his two friends, Gil and Charlie, it threatens to destroy the best thing in his life, his loving relationship with Katie, his sophomore sweetheart.

Murders

And the third story involves two new murders involving the book, an incident that echoes the incident 500 years ago when two persons were murdered to protect the book's secrets. That secret now threatens to engulf Sullivan and company as well.

Truth is, the similarities between the two books are only page-deep. First of all, instead of a single major puzzle as in "Da Vinci," "Four" features a ladder of puzzles—all of different kinds—that have to be solved. While "Da Vinci's" puzzles were truly complicated and some of them downright vexing, "Four's" puzzles tend to be playful and genuinely solvable. It could even be said that "Four" is chockfull of puzzles and codes that can almost be fun to hurdle.

Caldwell and Thomason gleefully indulge this aspect of the book: "In a world where half of the villagers always lie and half of them always tell the truth; where the hare never catches the tortoise because the distance between them shrinks by a never-collapsing infinity of halves... everything is sensible but the premise. A riddle is a castle built on air, perfectly habitable if you don't look down."

. Perhaps the biggest difference lies with the protagonist. "Da Vinci" features world-famous symbologist Robert Langdon, who happens not only to be extremely intelligent, handsome and athletic, but also apparently is lucky like no one else. In contrast, Sullivan is constantly tripping over himself, barely doing enough to save his skin and those of his friends. He is a completely believable character, full of flaws and prone to foibles, probably due to the fact that Caldwell actually did go to Princeton (Thomason went to Harvard).

Rite of passage

Thus, whenever "Four" maneuvers away from the secrets of the "Hypnerotemachia," the book deals with Sullivan's rite of passage with his friends and his fragile link to Katie. Sullivan—and through him, the authors—tends to brood rather spectacularly about these things: "the tongue of desire is forked, kissing two but loving one. Love draws lines between us like an astronomer plotting a constellation from stars, joining points into patterns that have no basis in nature. The butt of every triangle becomes the heart of another, until the roof of reality is a tessellation of love affairs."

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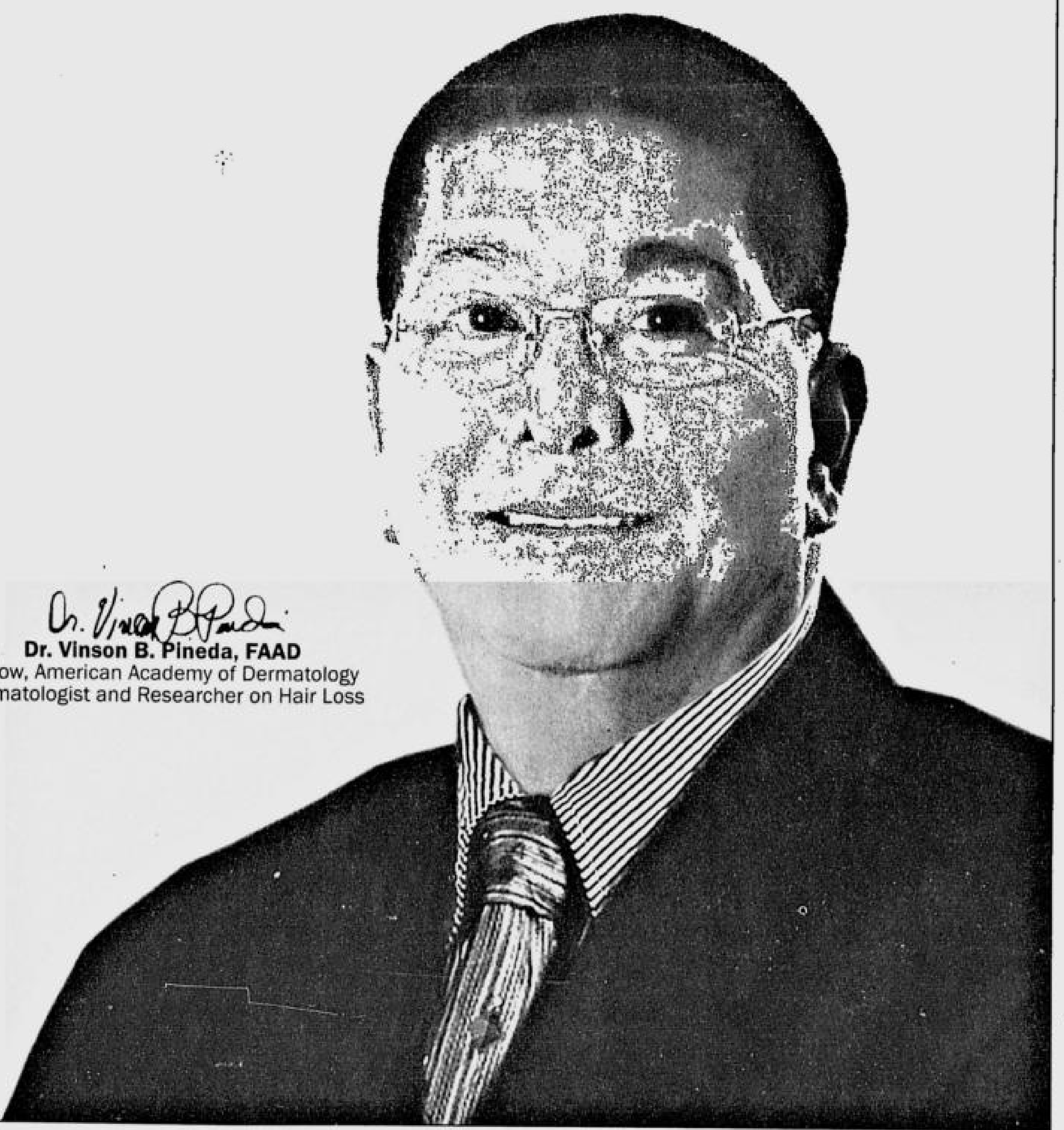

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FR. MIGUEL BERNAD, S.J.

'Philippine literature is no longer inchoate'

By Christine Godinez-Ortega
PDI Mindanao Bureau

"PHILIPPINE literature is no longer inchoate. We've advanced in many ways. The future of Philippine literature is assured," declared Fr. Miguel Anselmo Azcona Bernad, S.J., son of Mindanao and a leading intellectual of our day.

His statement ought to settle the issues he had raised when he declared four decades ago that Philippine literature was "perennially inchoate" and lacking "a well-defined theological dimension." He drew flak from all quarters, including tirades from the late poet, Ricaredo Demetillo.

Fr. Bernad, however, believes that for the country's literatures to attain quality, two things are required: good writers and good critics who possess "lots of tact."

Regardless of our opinion that writers do not care about the Punch and Judy of criticism, Fr. Bernad's opinion should matter to the thousands of literature students and hundreds of would-be Alunans, Bautistas, Tiempos, and Cruzes.

Sharp as ever at 87, though a little hard of hearing and his eyes not as good as they used to be, Fr. Bernad rose from his chair when I entered his cramped office of the Kinaadman (Wisdom), Journal of Southern Philippines, at Xavier University (XU).

It wasn't the best time to motor to Cagayan de Oro City from my home in Iligan City, and during a transport strike yet. I was shamelessly late, and were it not for the arrangements made by XU English department faculty Arlene Yandug and novelist Tony Enriquez, my dream interview with Fr. Bernad would not have taken place.

Taking his hand, I blurted, "This is going to be a personality piece, Father."

Fr. Bernad's face fell and I could've slapped myself for getting "tontaisque" (read: affected by show-biz virus).

"Oh, I thought we're going to discuss ideas," he said, lowering his stocky body on his chair before a rundown table where two magnifying glasses rested, tools of his trade, as the only editor the Kinaadman has known since its founding in 1979.

I needed time to regain my wits, so I focused on those magnifying glasses I imagined he didn't need two decades earlier when he was the first editor of the Ateneo de Manila University's journal, Philippine Studies.

Profound, humble man

Looking at the patrician face topped with a full shock of salt and pepper in a crew cut, I knew I was before a profound, humble man, and I promised not to ask him about mundane stuff. His awards and his publications speak for themselves: 20 books, hundreds of articles, including his columns in Bisaya magazine. There are also his columns in the Philippine Star and the Philippine Graphic, where he writes under a different byline.

Speaking English, Spanish and Cebuano with equal facility, this Yale University alumnus wears many hats as writer, teacher and priest, each job done with distinction and aplomb.

Fr. Bernad, however, considers priesthood as his greatest achievement.

FR. BERNAD: "We need good critics."

"As a boy, the church was dying because there were no priests in Misamis (the old name of Ozamiz). We would be lucky to have Masses during Christmas and Holy Week at the time," he said. He attributed the church's decline then to the Philippine Revolution, the growing influence of the Aglipayan Church and the coming of the Americans that shook the Church's foundation in Mindanao.

Fr. Bernad is one of eight children of Misamis's first governor, Don Anselmo Ledesma Bernad, who served as governor for 12 years and later, as representative of the second district of Misamis (present province of Misamis Occidental). Fr. Bernad said that though they are interested in writing, none of his nieces, nephews and cousins are writers because most of them are in business and politics. His brother, Fernando Tomas, became mayor of Ozamiz City. The mayor of Dumaguete City, Agustin "Toting" Perdices, is a first cousin.

Belonging to an illustrious family of Spanish and American ancestry, Fr. Bernad recalled that the Spanish and Filipino priests assigned in the area would dine at their house although "they lived in the convent, so by osmosis I became a priest. I was born with a vocation."

Travels

As a priest, he was able to study, travel and teach abroad, opportunities that the average person could only dream of.

He was always accorded respect wherever he went, especially while at Protestant Yale where there were few Catholic students. Fr. Bernad enjoyed Yale's library and fraternizing with his professors ("available anytime, no need for appointments"). He enjoyed Yale's many lounges as well as the Olympic-sized swimming pools at the gymnasium ("like a cathedral") that had an underground river for rowing. Best of all, Fr. Bernad enjoyed music (the Boston Symphony Orchestra) and theater (particularly memorable was Katherine Hepburn as "Rosalind" in Shakespeare's "As You Like It.")

If there's one thing that his former students would remember of him, it's his being an authority on Shakespeare. He said his over 30-year teaching job at the Ateneo de Manila was "a great experience." He evaluated his students by what they wrote and how they judged things instead of the medals they received.

He also shared his "pleasurable" teaching stint in Taiwan as a visiting professor in 1971. In 10 weeks with his Chinese students, he took up 10 plays by Shakespeare, opening the three-hour graduate class with readings and introductory lectures. In between, they drank tea. At the end of the term, his students "thanked" him for "giving the most difficult course."

Not that Fr. Bernad didn't learn a thing or two from his Chinese students who read Shakespeare with a "totally different set of moral values." It soon struck him that had he subjected his students in Manila to the same exercise, he was certain he would be "murdered."

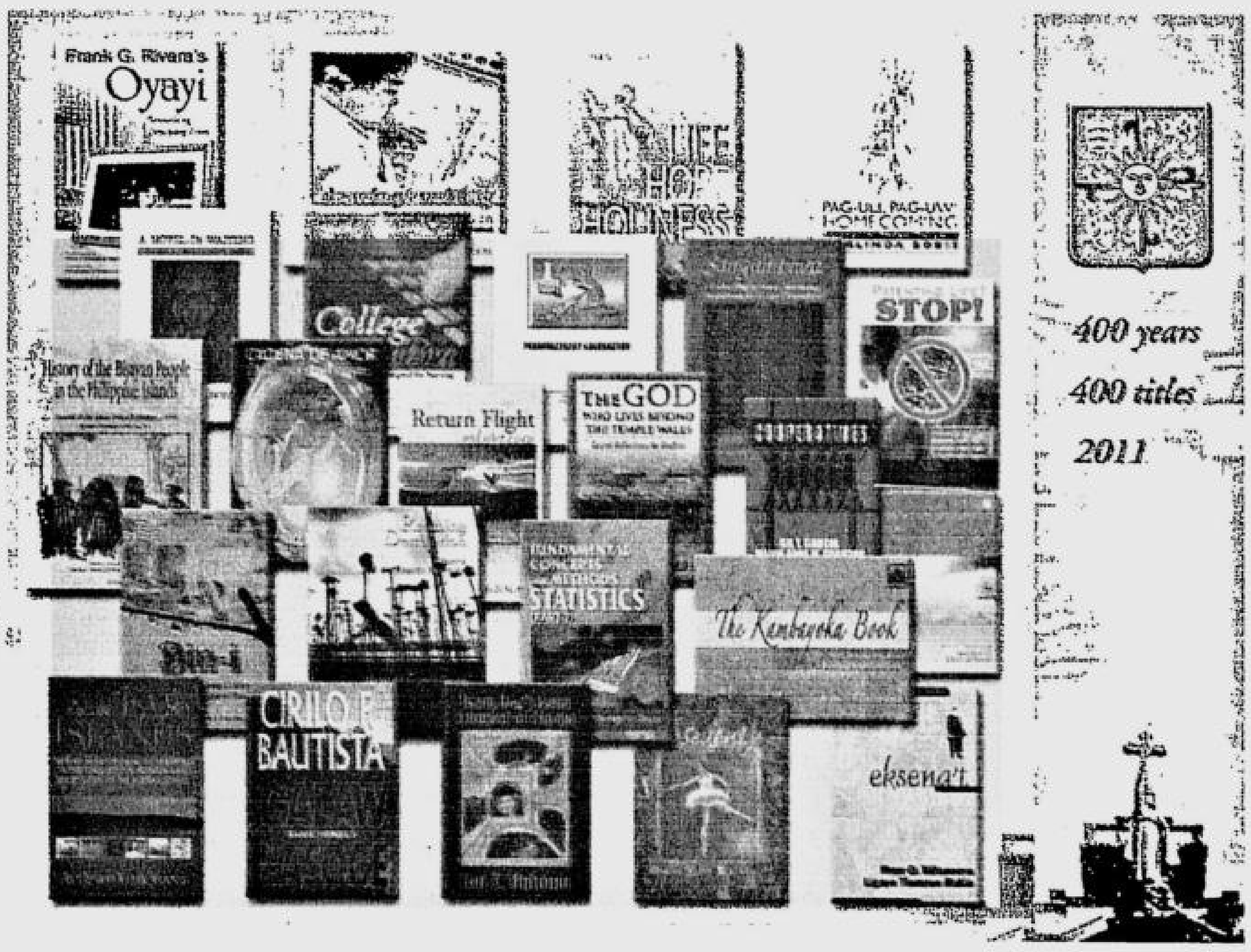
Shifting back to literature, Fr. Bernad said the most influential Filipino writers would be, "Nick Joaquin, Bienvenido Santos, NVM Gonzales and Isagani Cruz ("he deserves more credit for what he is doing"), and Jose Garcia Villa, not as a poet but as a most influential critic."

What of the women writers? We prod a visibly tired Fr. Bernad.

"Oh, we have Chitang Guerrero Nakpil, Edith Tiempo and Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, whose memoirs on Burma were impressive."

He confessed, however, that he's not in touch now with the literary scene and does not know the more promising writers since he only goes to Manila when he has to. He said that life in the past was simpler, with none of today's "deteriorations," such as the difficulty of getting a US visa, not being able to walk 50 blocks in the middle of the night—as he did before in New York—without getting mugged; and, in the Philippines, the young students' lack of a sense of history ("They don't know about the war with the Japanese!").

This interview, re-set twice, could have gone on and on, but for the time! But I had a wonderful time with my subject—Fr. Miguel Bernad, priest, writer, teacher—in that order.



UST launches 24 new titles

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Publishing House will launch 24 new titles tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the auditorium of Thomas Aquinas Research Complex, UST campus, Manila.

The launching is a prelude to the participation of the UST Publishing House at the 25th Manila International Book Fair at the World Trade Center, which opens Aug. 11.

The 24 books are also the first installment for this year of the UST Publishing House's program to publish at least 40 titles a year starting 2001 in the run-up to UST's 400th founding anniversary in 2011.

The titles to be launched are:

Theology and bioethics. "The God Who Lives Beyond the Temple Walls" by Fr. Emmanuel Fernandez; "Life, Hope and Holiness: UST Theology Week 2003," edited by Fausto Gomez, O.P. and Virgilio Suerte Felipe; and "Patenting Life? Stop!" by Fr. Sean McDonagh.

History and social sciences. "History of the Bisayan People in the Philippine Islands by Francisco Alcina, S.J., Vol. II," edited and translated by Fr. Cantius Kobak, O.F.M. and Lucio Gutierrez, O.P.; "In the Far Islands: The Role of the Natives from the Philippines in the Conquest, Colonization and Repopulation of the Marianas Islands, 1668-1903" by Augusto de Viana; and "Cooperatives" by Gil Garcia and Marie Anne Guanzon.

Literature, cultural studies, and creative arts. "Dancing at 70s" by Dehlia Napay Rebustillo; "Return Flight and Other Essays" by Tito Alquizola, M.D.; "Isang Daa't Isang Lungkot at Ligaya" by Teo Antonio; "Bin-I: New Theoretical and Critical Writings on Philippine Studies," edited by Janet Tauro-Batuigas and Ernesto Carandang II; "Galaw ng Asoge (Isang Nobela) by Cirilo Bautista; "A Novel-In-Waiting" and "Pag-uli, Pag-uwi, Homecoming" by Merlinda Bobis; "Oyayi (Sarswela ng Pamilyang Pinoy" by Frank Rivera; "The Kambayoka Book" by Arthur Cassanova; "Reaching Destination: Poems in Search for Home" by Nerissa del Carmen Guevarra; "Sangandiwa: Araling Filipino Bilang Talastasang Pangkalinangan at Lapit-Pananaliksik" by Rhoderick Nuncio and Elizabeth Morales-Nuncio; "Ekesena't Saknong" by Rene Villanueva and Ligaya Tiamson-Rubin; and "Cadena de Amor and Other Stories" by Wilfrido D. Nolledo.

Textbooks. "Physics Laboratory Manual" by Arnold Almonte, Sandra Dy and Dinah Briones; "College Algebra (Adapted for Nursing)" by Rosario Atienza, Piedad Pena, and Analin Sevilla; "Drawing and Writing (Exercises for Children)" by Johnny Decatoria; "Fundamental Concepts and Methods in Statistics (Part II)" by George Garcia; and "Pharmacology Laboratory Manual (Revised Edition)" by Rosalinda del Castillo-Solevilla.

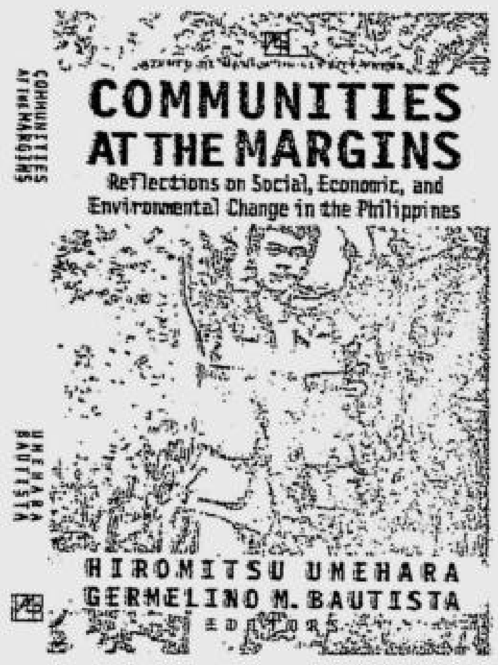
The book launching is open to the public. Call 7313522 or 7313101 loc. 8252 or 8278.

Ateneo Press joins book fair

FROM AUG. 11-15, the 25th International Book Fair will be held at the World Trade Center, Pasay City. Among the new books on display at the Ateneo Press-Jesuit Communication booth are the recently launched "Fantasy-Production: Sexual Economies and other Philippine Consequences for the New World Order" by Neferti Tadiar, "Sa Gitna ng Lusak" by Gerardo Chanco, "Communities at the Margins," edited by Germelino Bautista and Hiromitsu Umehara, "The Moral Dimension," edited by Nemesio Que, SJ, Oscar Bulaong and Michael Marlano, "Heroic Leadership" by Chris Lowney, and "A Morally Complex World" by James Bretzke, SJ.

The much-loved music and video collections will also be available. Call Ateneo Press at 4265984 or Jesuit Communications at 4265971.

Fantasy-Production
Sexual Economies and Other Philippine Consequences for the New World Order
Neferti Xina M. Tadiar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Reflections on Social, Economic, and Environmental Change in the Philippines
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HALAW

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THIS month, PowerBooks Specialty Store marks its 7th anniversary with a month-long sale starting Aug 1. It's time to stock up on the hottest titles with PowerBooks' wide selection of specialty Books. Expect books to be on sale up to 70 percent off. Every P2,500 purchase also entitles customers to a PowerBooks carry-all bag.

PowerBooks Specialty Store is a full-service specialty bookstore with branches at Greenbelt 4 (757-6428 to 29), Megamall (635-2898 to 99), Alabang (850-5662 to 63), and Glorietta (752-7075).

NERUDA

Honoring two great Spanish-language poets

Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish cultural center, is launching a multi-lingual anthology of Miguel Hernández's poems. It will be the first time a Spanish poet is translated into seven Filipino languages.

Instituto Cervantes will be displaying the Anthology project among its other publications during the International Book Fair at the World Trade Center on Aug. 11-15.

The poems will be in English and in seven Filipino languages: Tagalog, Cebuano, Pampango, Ilocano, Bicolano, Ilonggo and Chabacano. The Filipino poets who translated the poems into vernacular are Marra Lanot, Marjorie Evasco, Salvador Malig, Herminio Beltran, Jr., Francisco Peñones, Jr., Alice Sun Cua and Francis Macansantos.

A book presentation and poetry reading will be held at the RCBC Plaza on October 18 as part of "Fiesta," the Spanish festival for culture and the arts.

Dulaang UP, led by the director Jose Estrella, will also stage an original play on the life and poems of Hernández on Oct. 19 at the RCBC Plaza.

Along with Hernández, Chilean poet Pablo Neruda will also be honored in the festival. Neruda received a well-deserved Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971, while Hernández, who died at the young age of 31, is considered one of the greatest Spanish poets of the 20th century.

Instituto Cervantes, in collaboration with De La Salle University and the Embassy of Chile, is organizing "Neruda sa Puso" ("Neruda en el corazón"), a poetry reading with a different selection from last year's. A highlight of the event is the conferment rites of the Pablo Neruda Medal to F. Sionil Jose. In commemoration of the poet's centenary this year, the Chilean government will award one hundred poets all over the world with the Pablo Neruda Medal.

Mag features South Beach Diet with a Pinoy twist

METRO
AUGUST 2004
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PINOY STYLE

THE SOUTH Beach Diet. Everyone's talking about it, and everyone wants to try it. But where and how should one start?

In the August issue of Metro magazine, chef Bambi Sy Gobio explains the philosophy behind the popular diet favored by Hollywood stars. She also devices a two-week menu filled with "*lutong bahay*" recipes using local ingredients such as *tuyo, tokwa* and bangus belly. Losing weight has never tasted this good!

For those who've already gone on diet and now feeling sexy, find out how a Brazilian wax can improve your bedroom life and where you can get it in the city.

Also in Metro August: exclusive photographs and interviews with society doyenne Imelda Cojuangco and granddaughter Patty, an ultra-romantic fashion spread set against Vigan's old world charm, and a revealing story on cover girl Toni Gonzaga, co-host of the spoof news program "Wazzup, Wazzup" and the afternoon variety show, "Eat Bulaga."

Metro August is now available at magazine outlets and newsstands nationwide.

Rediscovering Luis Teodoro's socio-political literature

"THE UNDISCOVERED Country" by Luis V. Teodoro, published by the University of the Philippines Press, is a collection of short stories that are in the tradition of politically engaged literature, an important but lost genre in the development of Philippine literature in English. The book collects these Teodoro stories for the first time.

Teodoro is better known as a journalist and academic, having served for many years as dean of the UP College of Mass Communications. But, as Ramon Magsaysay awardee Bienvenido Lumbera says in his introduction to the book, he is "indivisibly journalist and artist."

Lumbera writes: "Realism in fiction, the enduring legacy of such outstanding elders writers as N.V.M. Gonzalez, Bienvenido N. Santos and Nick Joaquin from the 1950s, is the mode of Teodoro's stories..."

"Teodoro stood apart from his generation in going back to the tradition represented by journalist-artists of the early twentieth century, like Lope K. Santos and Amado V. Hernandez. Not to mention Rizal and the writers of the Propaganda Movement."

It's time for these important stories to be made available to readers again. The book sells for P300 and is available at the UP Press book stores in Diliman, Mindanao and Baguio, Aeon Books in Katipunan, Popular Bookstore in Morato, Solidaridad, PowerBooks and National Book Store.

Aeta, Mangyan books from New Day

PIONEER Filipiniana publishing house New Day Publishers is releasing two ethnological books that dwell on the struggle for survival of the country's ethnic groups—"The Aeta at the Mount Pinatubo, Philippines: A Minority Group Coping with Disaster" by Stefan Seitz, and "Mangyan Survival Strategies" by Jurg Helbling and Volker Schult.

Seitz's book chronicles the lifestyle of Aetas on the western slopes of Mount Pinatubo in Zambales and how they have managed to preserve their centuries-old traditions and hunter-gatherer culture despite contact with the lowland population. The 314-page book also examines how the tribe has coped with its new situation after the volcano's destructive eruption in 1991.

The book was originally written in German text by the ethnologist-author, who spent decades of field research with pygmy tribes in Palawan, Agusan del Norte and Zambales, as well as in Congo and Borneo.

"Mangyan Survival Strategies" examines the exploitation of the island province of Mindoro and its indigenous inhabitants called the Mangyans. Various migrations drove them up into the hills—and simultaneous with their passive resistance, Mindoro lost its abundant natural resources due to the misuse of colonizers from the Spaniards to the Japanese, and local settlers and landlords.

The book presents statistics and maps to show how the Mangyans became a minority and how Mindoro lost its lush forest cover.

The books are available at leading book stores nationwide. Call 9288046 and 9275982 or e-mail newdayorders@edsamail.com.ph.

Look at what 'Da Vinci Code' has done

From page G1

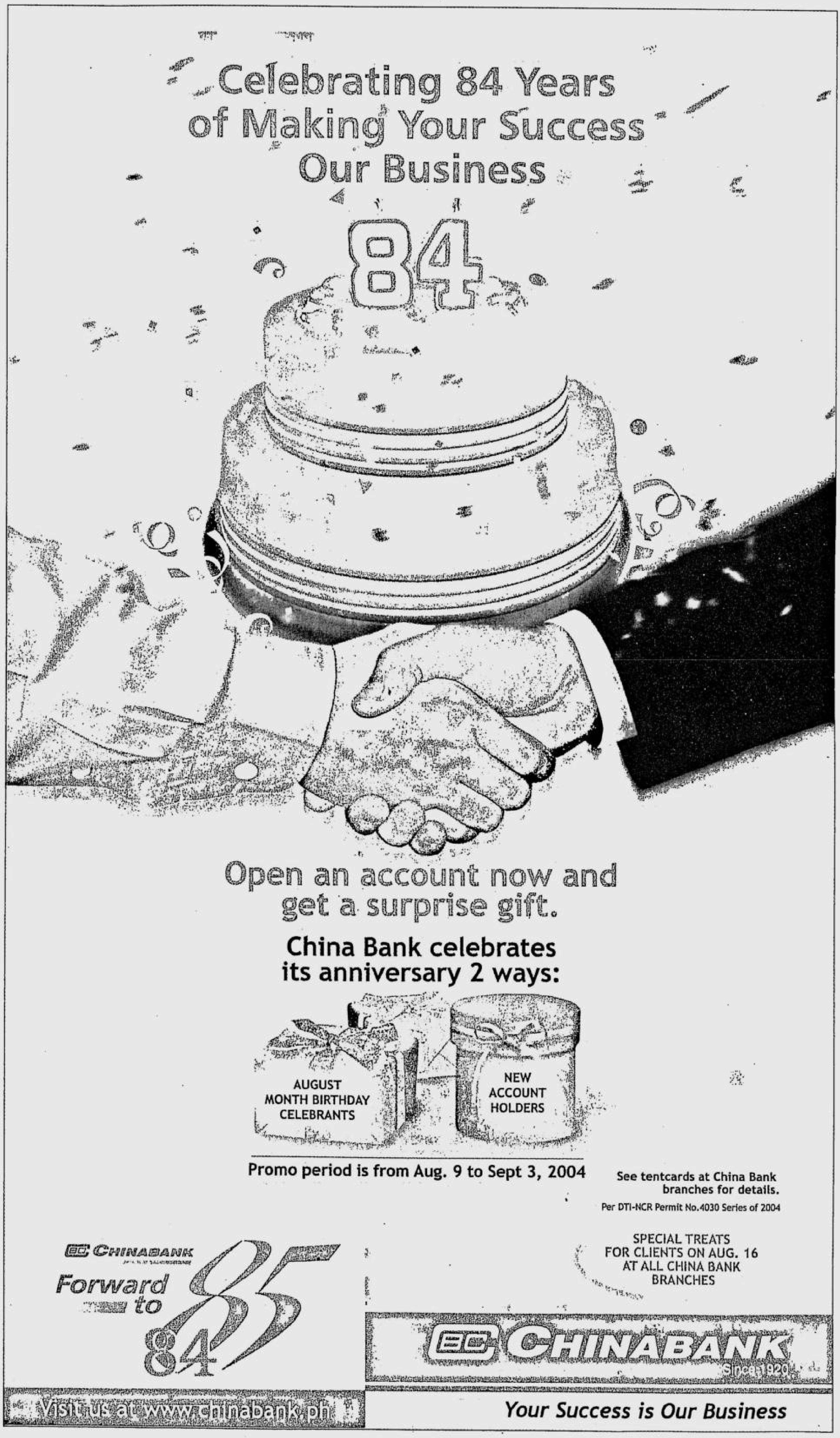
By now, it is also clear that Caldwell and Thomason have a tendency to write overheated prose. Actually, the prose and plot are somewhat uneven, moving from obvious and heavy-handed conceits (the deaths in the university) to profound and moving. While the plot of "Four" is pretty much linear, now and then the authors decide to hit the reader with a whammy of a reflection. The investigation and eventual resolution of the campus murders is almost laughable.

But Caldwell and Thomason wield just enough alchemy to keep the reader interested in the fate of Sullivan and, though with a little less enthusiasm, for the secret of the "Hypnerotomachia." In that sense, the book is an unabashedly and sometimes overwhelmingly sentimental character study as well as a "Da Vinci"-style mystery.

In the end, it is as Sullivan's mother said of love and desire: "It means people spend their lives wanting things they shouldn't. The world confuses them into taking their love and aiming it where it doesn't belong... All it takes to be happy is to love the right things, in the right amounts."

Caldwell and Thomason load their debut novel with enough visual and coded puzzles to keep the lover of the historical, artistic mystery in thrall to a certain degree. But "The Rule of Four" is really a totally different book from "Da Vinci," despite the similarities. It is, instead, a troubled Ivy League senior's melodramatic quest for happiness and closure, a quest that is exemplified by and yet also often obscured by an ancient book of death and devotion.

Available in hardcover from National Bookstore and PowerBooks.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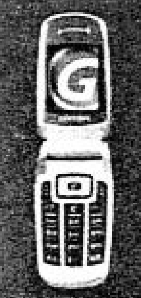

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"In Search of Retailing Excellence"

presents

13th National Retailers Conference

and

STORES ASIA EXPO 2004

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August 12 to 13, Isla Ballroom (Conference)
August 11 to 13, Bohol, Dapitan, Sulu and Palawan Rooms, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong (Exhibit)

Messages

WITH a fresh mandate to govern the nation for the next six years, I call on all sectors to work together so that we may realize our vision of a strong Philippine Republic.

I am pleased to note that the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA), a conglomeration of the retail players in the country, has heeded this call by helping reinvigorate the economy through its annual conference and exhibit with this year's theme "In Search of Retail Excellence."

I commend PRA for not losing sight of its mission of helping improve the economy by upgrading the standards of retailing and creating opportunities for SMEs to enter this dynamic field. This mission runs parallel with the government's primary objective of generating six to ten million jobs by giving entrepreneurs all the support they need for growth and development. As employer of a significant number of our workforce the retailers have the capability to respond to that noble objective.

To the officers and members of the PRA, my congratulations to a successful 13th NRCE. Your invaluable contribution to the economy will help us stay the course towards a strong Philippine Republic.

More power and MABUHAY!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

OUR warmest greetings and congratulations to the officers and members of the Philippine Retailers Association as you hold the 13th National Retailers Conference & Stores Asia Expo on 11-13 August 2004 at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

Globalization has changed the map of the retailing word. As trade liberalization opened our shores to international retailers. Filipino entrepreneurs proved that they are never swayed by hardship. They saw that the door that brings in foreign competition is also their portal to the global arena.

With globalization, retailers compete not just for a niche in the domestic market but eventually in the larger international market. Therefore, excellence - in the development of products and services - has become a necessary factor for survival and sustainable business growth.

The honors from prestigious international business organizations for business leadership, innovation and excellence are testaments that the Filipino entrepreneur can make it big internationally. We are confident that this conference will encourage your members to continue to aim for the top - for their own achievement, for the benefit of consumers, and for the glory of the country.

The DTI is proud to be a partner of the Philippine Retailers Association in promoting a culture of excellence in the retail trade sector.

Mabuhay!

CESAR V. PURISIMA
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry

FOR THE THIRTEENTH year, we gather today as an industry to discover what lies ahead for the retail sector. There may be new information, new technology, new developments, successful strategies and new trends. There may also be new challenges or new policies that may affect positively or negatively, the growth of the industry.

We are fortunate to have this annual conference that enables us to gain valuable information and keep abreast of developments and network with our peers. With this year's theme, "In Search of Retailing Excellence," we will be highlighting outstanding achievements in the various fields of retail. Local and global retail industry updates, winning trends in advertising and promotions, new financing strategies, effective selling and marketing are some of the focal points to be discussed in the conference.

May this occasion serve as a venue for all industry players to renew their commitment to retail excellence.

Thank you and welcome to the 13th National Retailers Conference and Exhibit.

HENRY SY, SR.
Honorary Chairman, PRA
Chairman, SM Group of Companies

IT IS my pleasure to welcome the delegates and guests to the 13th National Retailers Conference and Stores Asia Expo (NRCE).

This year's theme, "In Search of Retailing Excellence", elevates our focus to acknowledging the best in the field of retail – be it retail operations, marketing, product development, technology, and the like. I am proud that we Filipinos do not lack for representatives that exemplify the best in the retail field; the recent honor given to a homegrown fastfood chain is a fine example. What we hope for is a replication of this achievement by more Filipino businessmen to prove to the world that we are a country where excellence is not only a goal but an impetus and a path to the goal.

Mindful of this, we have assembled the best minds and leading figures in the retail industry – many of whom are TOYM awardees and Agora awardees – to share their experiences; insights and trade secrets and inspire or motivate conference delegates to aspire for excellence and contribute to the strengthening and perfection of the Philippine retail sector. By doing so, we hope to generate and encourage more business activities and be a factor in steering our country towards economic vitality.

I am confident that new and veteran retailers alike will glean valuable information from our distinguished and astute speakers and their timely topics. I am proud to say that the NRCE continues to be a vital source of knowledge to which retailers have turned to for the enhancement of their know-how and the expansion of their respective businesses.

As the biggest retail event in the country, the NRCE is the ultimate platform where the best and the brightest of the retail sector converge and consult with each other; create partnerships; and commit themselves to excellence and make the Philippine retail industry at par with the world's best.

After all, it is only through excellence that we can boldly tackle the challenges we are facing.

SAMIE LIM
Chairman Emeritus, PRA
President, Automatic Centre

Power Packed Conference Speakers

Keynote Speaker:
HON. CESAR V. PURISIMA
Secretary
Department of Trade & Industry (DTI)

Sec. Cesar Purisima carries over his position as head of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) under the new Arroyo administration. Before DTI, he had held various positions as chair and managing partner of SGV & Co and member of both the global executive board and global practice council of Ernst & Young. He was also the former president and chair of the board of trustees of the SGV Foundation and chair of the Board of Directors of The Knowledge Institute Inc.

Purisima was also a member of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), American Management Association (AMA), the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), the Business Sector Advisory Group for the Philippines on Corporate Governance (BSAG) and the board of advisors, W. Sycip Policy Center of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

He completed his Masters Degree in Business Administration at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois. He was also Fellow of The Eminent Southeast Asians Programme, Singapore International Foundation in 2003.

Keynote Speaker:
NAPOLEON L. NAZARENO
President/CEO
PLDT
"Philippines' Overall Best-Managed Company" (Asia Money)

Napoleon Nazareno is currently the president and CEO of telecommunication giants PLDT, which was recently adjudged as the Philippines' Overall Best-Managed Company by Asia Money and Smart Communications Inc. He also holds various key positions in other organizations, such as chair of the board of the Pilipino Telephone Corp (Piltel), chair of I-Contacts Corp, director of PLDT Global Corp, e-PLDT and Negros Navigation Company, president of Aces Cellular Corp and governor of the Management Association of the Philippines among others.

Under Nazareno's leadership, Smart won the Asia Pacific Wireless Service Provider of the Year in Singapore, the Best Mobile Application or Service for the Consumer Market in Cannes, France and Philippines' Best Employer in an Asia-wide study conducted by the Far Eastern Economic Review, the Asian Wall Street Journal, the Management Association of the Philippines and Business World. He also earned for Smart the distinction of being in the Top 10 Philippine Companies in terms of corporate leadership for three consecutive years. For two years, he was also awarded the Manager of the Year of Akerlund & Rausing Group Worldwide.

Nazareno completed his Insead Executive Program at the European Institute of Business Administration, Fountainbleau, France. He also earned his Masters in Business Management Degree at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

ERNESTO R. ALBERTO
Senior Vice President
PLDT Corporate Business Group

Ernesto Alberto brought with him to PLDT over 20 years of extensive experience in corporate banking, relationship management and business development. As PLDT corporate business group head, he leads the formulation and implementation of company strategies involving products / services development and management to address corporate customer requirements. He also directs the end-to-end aspect of delivering services to corporate customers—from marketing, solution selling, billing, credit and collection, provisioning, maintenance and relationship management.

MARNIE S. TOLOSA
Solutions Manager / Partner Group Manager - Enterprise Group
Microsoft Philippines

Engineer Marnie S. Tolosa currently holds two positions in Microsoft Philippines: solutions manager and partner group manager for the Enterprise Group. As a solutions manager, he is responsible for developing industry-solution roadmaps for key local industries offering end-to-end solutions based on Microsoft products and technology. As a partner group manager, his team supports and develops key partners that implement and support these solutions for the Enterprise.

Prior to joining Microsoft, he worked for Oracle Philippines for six years in various roles, including as industry manager for retail and manufacturing industry. He also worked for SAP Philippines as senior business consultant supporting three industries— telecommunications, retail and manufacturing. He is one of SAP Philippines' first certified SAP consultants.

FRANCES J. YU
President
FJY Consulting

Frances Yu is a veteran of the marketing and retail industry. Her career to date has included executive positions for leading retailers, which include Rustan's Department Store, Royal Duty Free, and most recently Shopwise Supercenters. In her last position as assistant vice president for marketing for Shopwise Supercenters, she was instrumental in helping the start-up company attain market leadership in the hypermarket sector. As a result, she received the Advertising and Promotions Excellence Award from the Rustan Group of Companies.

She is also an experienced speaker and lecturer in various marketing and retail related seminars for such organizations as the Marketing and Opinion Research Society of the Philippines, the Direct Marketing Association of the Philippines, the Philippine Marketing Association, Association of Marketing Educators and the Philippine Retailers Association where she is also a member of the NRCE programs committee, to name a few.

She is currently the President of FJY Consulting, a marketing and management firm. She received her undergraduate degree from Fordham University in New York City where she graduated Summa Cum Laude.

DANIEL HOPPING
Consulting Marketing Manager
IBM Corporation (USA)

Daniel Hopping has worked for IBM for over 30 years. He has worked with many retailers on about every facet of the business. He has held both systems and marketing management positions in many areas of IBM's Retail Industry organization and is responsible for the retail executive briefing center in IBM's retail store solutions division.

He has recently been focusing on the future of the store in this age of intense competition and too-fast changing technology. He also coordinates the alliances between the retail-oriented university programs and IBM's retail industry. He is on the board of several global organizations such as Rila's Global Retail Innovation Council and the Textile Clothing / Technology Corp's technology board.

ERNESTO JOSE S. BILAR
Senior Product Manager - Process Supply Chain Solutions
Oracle South Asia

Ernesto Jose S. Bilar is the senior product manager at Oracle South Asia focusing on process supply chain solutions. He has been with Oracle for more than eight years. He has traveled extensively around Asia to help transform Oracle's customers and prospects to become e-business companies. Prior to joining Oracle he had worked 9 years as a consultant for Andersen Consulting. Bilar has a Masters Degree in Industrial Engineering and Management specializing in Manufacturing Systems Engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology.

BIKASH KUMAR
Director
Integrated Retail Management Consulting Pvt. Ltd. (India)

Bikash Kumar is founder and director of the Integrated Retail Management Consulting (IRMC). Under his leadership, IRMC has become a leading retail consulting firm in India. With IRMC, he consults with leading retailers, retail service and technology companies offering automation solutions to top retail companies across the world.

Kumar is currently involved with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) retail steering committee, a network of industry professionals that meets to discuss common interests, growth strategies and best practices in its endeavor to develop retailing in India. Kumar has also led several research projects including the annual "State of Retail Technology in India Research."

BIENVENIDO V. TANTOCO III
President, PRA
EVP / GM, Shopwise

Bienvenido Tantoco III is currently the president of the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA) and the executive vice president and general manager of the Philippines' first supercenter, Shopwise. Under his able leadership, the company generated sales of P3.8 billion in 2003. Tantoco was also connected with Rustan Commercial Corp for seven years as VP for corporate planning and business development and market research. In 1993, he was also the executive vice president and general manager of the Royal Duty Free Shops Inc where it established large-scale duty free operations in the Freeport zones of Subic and Clark.

Under PRA, Tantoco also outlined priorities for the association, such as retail advocacy, membership development and industry development, all of which are aimed at putting PRA's vital role as the "Pulse and Voice of the Retail Industry" by ensuring that the interests of the members, and the retail sector as a whole, are amply represented on various national issues and industry concerns.

He finished his Bachelors Degree in Economics in Connecticut College in the United States and had his Master of Management Degree in JL Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University, Illinois.

MA. YOLANDA VILLANUEVA-ONG
Group Chairperson
Campaigns & Grey

Yolanda Ong is the founder and CEO of the advertising agency Campaigns & Grey and its satellite companies Campaigns Direct & Design and Campaigns Advocacy & PR Inc. Ong has mounted several creative training / seminars in the areas of print production, radio, film production and presentation skills. She is also a speaker of several local and regional marketing conferences of JWT and multinational clients such as Unilever, SCJohnson and Union Carbide.

Ong has been awarded for her numerous accomplishments, e.g. Finalist for Socially Responsible Entrepreneur, First Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2004; Lifetime Achievement Award, Creative Guild of the Philippines 2002; Agora Award for Outstanding Achievement in Marketing Management, Philippine Marketing Association 1999; The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) Award for Communications: Social Marketing 1995; and others.

AMB. JESUS P. TAMBUNTING
Chairman & CEO
Planters Development Bank

Ambassador Jesus Tambunting is the chair and CEO of Planters Development Bank (Plantersbank), the country's leading bank for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Plantersbank has prestigious international organizations among its shareholders— the ADB, the Dutch government's Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO), and the World Bank's International Finance Corporations (IFC). Together, these institutions own 40 percent of Plantersbank,

Outside of Plantersbank, Tambunting is also the co-chair of the Philippine-British Business Council and recently elected chair of the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (Adfiap). He also served as the Philippines' Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 1993 to 1998.

He was conferred Management Man of the Year 2003 by the Management Association of the Phiippines.

J. RICHARD SORIANO
Founder & President
BCD Pinpoint Direct Marketing, Inc.

J. Richard Soriano is the founder and president of BCD Pinpoint Direct Marketing Inc, the largest DM agency in the Philippines. He is also chairman of OgilvyOne Worldwide Manila and a member of the Board of Ogilvy & Mather Philippines. Under his helm, BCD Pinpoint won the country's first ever Cannes Lion, a tremendous feat, given that the Cannes International Advertising Festival has been around for 50 years. BCD Pinpoint also won the country's first ever Gold Echo, and the country's first Caples Award. Both awards are considered the world's most prestigious direct marketing awards.

Under Soriano's management, OgilvyOne became the first Philippine agency to win the Best DM campaign in Asia in the 1999 Asian Direct Marketing Awards. OgilvyOne was also the first Philippine agency to win the Silver Clio, a feat none of the bigger and more established advertising agencies has achieved so far.

ROD H. NEPOMUCENO
Columnist, Business Life Section of The Philippine Star
Corporate Affairs Director, MTV Philippines

Rod Nepomuceno writes a widely followed column in the Philippine Star entitled "It's a Wonderful Life." He tackles light business topics and everyday life issues. Nepomuceno is also currently the corporate affairs director of MTV Philippines, which is the biggest and most successful media brand in the world. He heads all strategic marketing and communications planning of MTV Philippines. He is a media practitioner at heart but he is also a lawyer, which serves him well as legal consultant for immediate legal concerns of the company, including negotiation and coordination with government agencies.

SPEAKERS/ H2

Power Packed Conference Speakers

From page H1

Nepomuceno was also a member of various organizations such the First Gentlemen Foundation, Next Media and the International Marketing Group (IMG) and had relevant media experience as newscaster of TV stations RPN 9, NBN 4 and ABC 5.

PETER GALE
Retailer Services Director
ACNielsen

Peter Gale was educated at Southampton University in England and obtained an Honors degree in Accountancy and Law. He then worked at ACNielsen for three years as an account manager, working with many leading manufacturers in Europe. This was followed by five years at Safeway, a leading UK supermarket chain, where he was responsible for running category management projects with various major suppliers. In 1994, he came to Asia and has spent the last 10 years as ACNielsen's retailer services director, helping to develop the use of information with the leading retailers in the region.

DR. EDUARDO ROBERTO, Ph.D.
Professor, Coca-cola Foundation - International Marketing
Asian Institute of Management (AIM)

Dr. Ned Roberto is the Coca-Cola Foundation professor in International Marketing at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). His teaching and research areas of interest include basic marketing, marketing research, social marketing, social marketing research and consumer behavior. He is currently chair and president of Roberto & Associates Inc, a marketing research and consulting agency.

Roberto was the 1985 president of the Marketing & Opinion Research Society of the Philippines (Mores) and the recipient of the Philippine Marketing Association Agora Award for Achievement in Marketing Education in 1983. He has also authored 9 well researched marketing books and taught at the Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management Chicago Campus and at the Euro-Asia Centre of Insead Macau and Singapore programs.

Roberto received his Doctor of Philosophy in Marketing and a Master in Business Administration from the Kellogg Management School of Northwestern University (1973).

JAY ALDEGUER
President
Islands Souvenirs

Jay Aldeguer has etched his name as one of the most creative and innovative entrepreneurs in the retail and tourism industries. He is best identified with his brainchild, Islands Souvenirs, which created a unique brand that brought the souvenirs industry to unprecedented heights in terms of branding, creativity, innovation and quality. Islands Souvenirs today has over a hundred outlets nationwide in over a dozen island destinations. His global outlook has now taken Islands Souvenirs from the Philippines to stores in Japan, Singapore and the United States. For this, Islands Souvenirs has been awarded three times the Outstanding Retailer of the Year and was recently inducted to the Outstanding Filipino Retailers (OFR) Hall of Fame by the PRA and DTI.

While navigating the company towards this vision, Aldeguer has gathered one recognition after another. He was the youngest person, at the age of 27, to be awarded the prestigious Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) for Business Entrepreneurship by then Philippine President Fidel Ramos. This award was followed, most recently, by Entrepreneur Philippines' "10 Most Outstanding Filipino Entrepreneurs". And out of the 10, Aldeguer was selected to receive the Johnnie Walker Striding Man Award for personifying the brand's ideal of inspiring personal progress. Late last year, Aldeguer was also the recipient of the prestigious Agora Award for his outstanding achievement in business entrepreneurship. In March this year, Aldeguer was awarded as one of the finalists of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award.

SAMIE LIM
Chairman Emeritus, PRA
Chairman, PFA
President, Automatic Center

Known in the business circle as the "Father of Franchising in the Philippines," Samie Lim is the founding president and chair of the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA). He is also currently chair emeritus of the PRA and the past chair of the Federation of Asian Retailers Associations (Fara), and was vice president for trade and tourism of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry for several terms.

In 1999, he served Undersecretary with the DTI and general manager of the National Development Company under DTI. At the onset of the retail trade liberalization and the e-commerce law, he saw the massive opportunities available in the retail, franchise and IT industries, and thus decided to return to the private sector. He spearheaded the development of the Domestic Trade Development Council under the Office of the President, and is one of the prime movers of the Institute of Corporate Governance.

He is also the immediate past chair of the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation, an association of recognized franchise associations in Asia-Pacific and the vice chair for Asia of the World Franchise Council, which has more than 40 member-countries.

Today, he continues to be a moving spirit in the business sector. A cum laude graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University, he completed the Top Management Program of the Asian Institute of Management as well as the Strategic Business and Economic Program of the University of Asia and the Pacific. He also has special training at the Sophia University in Tokyo and at the Institute of International Studies and training in Fujinomia, Japan.

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RAMON B. FAVILA APPAREL

13th National Retailers Conference
August 12 to 13, 2004, Isla Ballroom, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel
"In Search of Retailing Excellence"
Program

Day 1 (August 12)

8:00 – 9:00 am	REGISTRATION	
9:00 – 10:00 am	OPENING CEREMONIES Invocation / National Anthem Overview & Formal Opening of the Conference	 - Mr. Frederick D. Go NRCE Overall Chairman President, Robinsons Recreational Corp.
	Opening Statement	- Mr. Samie Lim PRA Chairman Emeritus President, Automatic Center
10:00 – 10:45 am	Keynote Speaker 1	- Hon. Cesar V. Purisima DTI Secretary
10:45 – 11:30 am	Keynote Speaker 2	- Mr. Napoleon L. Nazareno President / CEO, PLDT
11:30 – 11:50 am	Luncheon Session *Delivering Cutting Edge Solutions to Corporate Customers* Mr. Ernesto R. Alberto, SVP, PLDT Corporate Business Group	
11:50 – 1:30 pm	NETWORKING LUNCH Fashion Show - Criterion	
1:30 – 2:15 pm	PLENARY 1 *Smarter Retailing* Engr. Marnie S. Tolosa, Solutions Mgr / Partner Group Mgr - Enterprise Group, Microsoft Phils.	
2:15 – 3:00 pm	PLENARY 2 *Branding Strategies for Retailers* Ms. Frances J. Yu, President, FJY Consulting	
3:00 – 3:45 pm	PLENARY 3 *The Next Generation Store: Global Trends in Retailing* Mr. Daniel Hopping, Consulting Marketing Manager, IBM Corp.	
3:45 – 4:00 pm	COFFEE BREAK	
4:00 – 4:45 pm	PLENARY 4 *Supercharging the Value Chain* Mr. Ernesto Jose S. Bilar, Sr. Product Mgr – Process Supply Chain Solutions, Oracle South Asia	
4:45 – 5:30 pm	PLENARY 5 *If You Don't Measure It, You Can't Manage It: Retail Metrics that Matter* Mr. Bikash Kumar, Director, Integrated Retail Management Consulting (India)	

Day 2 (August 13)

8:00 – 9:00 am	REGISTRATION
9:00 – 09:45 am	PLENARY 6 *The Philippine Retail Industry* Mr. Bienvenido V. Tantoco III, PRA President, EVP / GM, Shopwise
9:45 – 10:30 am	PLENARY 7 *Winning Trends in Advertising & Promotions* Ms. Yolanda Ong, Group Chairperson, Campaigns & Grey
10:30 – 11:15 am	PLENARY 8 *Strategic Financing for SMEs* Amb. Jesus P. Tambunting, Chairman, Planters Development Bank
11:15 – 12:00 noon	PLENARY 9 *The Battle for the Customer's Share of Life* Mr. J. Richard Soriano, Founder / President, BCD Pinpoint
12:00 – 12:20 pm	LUNCHEON SESSION *There's Better Business in GlobeQUEST Store Express* Speaker c/o GlobeQUEST
12:20 – 2:30 pm	NETWORKING LUNCH Fashion Show – Ramon Favila Apparel
2:30 – 3:00 pm	PLENARY 10 *Inspirational Talk* Mr. Rod Nepomuceno, Columnist, The Philippine Star
3:00 – 3:45 pm	PLENARY 11(Coffee will be served) *Shopper Trends – Understanding Consumers' Shopping Habits* Mr. Peter Gale, Retailer Services Director, ACNielsen
3:45 – 4:30 pm	PLENARY12 *Budget-Friendly Market Research at Point of Purchase* Dr. Eduardo Roberto, Professor, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)
4:30 – 5:15 pm	PLENARY 13 *Success Stories on Retail Entrepreneurship* Mr. Jay Aldeguer, President, Islands Souvenirs

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Messages

ON BEHALF of the Philippine Retailers Association, welcome to this year's major retail event.

As chairman of the PRA, I am proud to say that we have consistently been able to stage a conference and exhibit that is eagerly awaited by all retailers. Our conference is a major source of information and trends for retailers and our exhibit is a showcase of what's new in the retail supply industry.

With this year's theme "In Search of Retailing Excellence," our participants and sponsors are assured of a wealth of information that will positively impact their businesses and raise retailing standards. We have gathered together the best practitioners in their respective fields who will illustrate excellence in various areas.

At this point, allow me to thank the men and women behind the NRCE who guarantee that each and every NRCE exceed the expectation of retailers.

Once again, welcome to the 13th NRCE and thank you for your continued support to this endeavor.

MANUEL M. SIGGAOAT
Chairman, PRA
Chairman, Manel's Leathergoods Corp.

ON BEHALF of the Philippine Retailers Association, I would like to welcome you to the 13th National Retailers Conference and Exhibit.

For the last few years, we have been forced to cope with a multitude of economic and political, local and global difficulties. Most of us, however, have emerged from these series of consecutive and unanticipated crises: stronger, better and wiser. No matter what troubles we faced, we continued to innovate and we continued to strive not just for survival but also and more importantly, for excellence.

This commitment to excellence and growth in boom and bust periods, is perhaps most apparent in the continuous development and improvement of our retail landscape. And thus today, Filipino consumers receive much better service, and have a much wider range of affordable choices in terms of not only products, but also store formats, experiences and entertainment.

The goal of the conference this year is to offer new ideas, frameworks and tools that will hopefully stimulate and motivate Filipino retailers to strive for higher levels of business and retailing excellence. And hence, we have invited what we believe to be the foremost models of excellence within and without the retail sector to share their ideas, winning formulas, trials and errors and experiences with us.

I would like to thank our sponsors who have so constantly and generously supported many of our endeavors to upgrade the standards of our industry. I would also like to thank our delegates for your attendance this year. We hope that we will be able to help you gain the knowledge that you seek and need.

BIENVENIDO V. TANTOCO III
President, PRA
EVP/GM, Shopwise

IT IS with pleasure that I welcome all the guests and delegates of the 13th National Retailers Conference and Exhibit (NRCE)!

Retailing has become so competitive that in order to succeed, one must be armed with the right information and the right attitude. I'm proud to say that the 13th NRCE offers both.

This year's conference theme "In Search of Retailing Excellence" presents a lot of relevant information from credible and successful individuals. From a general overview of the industry to the more detailed areas of retail operation, delegates are assured of top quality information for today's retail challenges. The simultaneous retail suppliers exhibit presents retailers with the best and the latest in technology and services.

Choosing excellence as the conference's theme stresses the point that retailers should always strive to achieve for optimum performance and aim for superlative results. If retailers are to stay in the game, then nothing less is expected.

To the guests and delegates, a warm welcome. Let's all look forward to a more vibrant retail industry.

ROBERTO S. CLAUDIO
Vice Chairman, External Affairs
Chairman, Toby's Sports & Hobbies

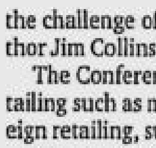
MY WARMEST welcome to the guests and participants of the 13th National Retailers Conference.

We retailers live in a highly competitive world where the strategies and methods that spelled sales success in the past are being replaced by newer approaches and tactics. In this regard, we are fortunate that we have this conference and exposition that keeps us abreast of the latest developments in retail and updates us on the significant changes affecting the industry.

The theme for this year's conference is an appropriate rallying point for all serious retailers. "In Search for Retailing Excellence" encourages us to make the transition from just doing good to establishing great despite the challenges facing the retail sector. Our speakers are experts from different fields; they will share with us how we can make such a transition.

I am optimistic that by working closer together we may be able to achieve the goal of excellence not only in our industry but in society as well.

MA. ALEGRIA S. LIMJOCO
Vice Chairman, Internal Affairs
President, Gibson Phoenix



WELCOME to all the delegates and guests of the 13th National Retailers Conference and Exhibition.

This year's organizing committee once again was tasked with the challenge of making our Conference relevant and inspiring to all the Filipino retailers.

Timing allowed us to witness the Arroyo administration getting a fresh mandate, and with that, we leave behind last year's topic of "Surviving and Thriving in Times of Crisis." We now move on with our business, searching for excellence. We believe that the challenge of transforming a company from Good to Great, a concept popularized recently by author Jim Collins, is something facing most of us today.

The Conference will gather the best resource speakers available to discuss the various fields of retailing such as marketing, operations, merchandising, as well as special topics on customer value, foreign retailing, supply chain management, among others.

We assure you that this Conference and Exhibition will be worthy of your participation, as we remember that being "good enough" is the arch-enemy of being "GREAT."

Thank you very much and more power!

FREDERICK D. GO
Excom Chairman, PRA
President, Robinsons Recreation Corp.

GLOBEQUEST TAPS RETAIL INDUSTRY

Realizing the huge potentials of the retail market, GlobeQUEST, the corporate business group of Innove Communications, Inc., has taken steps to tap the segment by addressing its IT and networking requirements.

The retail industry is considered as one of the key drivers of the economy with an average annual growth of 5-6%. It accounts for 54.5% of the total number of business establishments in the country.

Jesus C. Romero, GlobeQUEST head, explained yesterday that as companies continue to expand and put up branches in various locations, there is now an imminent need for them to monitor sales and inventory on a real-time basis and ensure simplification of their business processes to be more efficient and productive.

"For a retail firm to have speedy, consistent and reliable access to its business transactions such as sales and inventory reports, it must be able to link all its branches to the company headquarters. They have to do this over a fast and secure connection with a strategic and credible provider like GlobeQUEST. GlobeQUEST works to understand how each industry operates and thus, bundles solutions for them specific to their needs," he explained.

In response to such need, GlobeQUEST came up with Store Express, a fast, cost-effective and reliable solution specifically designed and bundled to address the IT and networking requirements of the retail industry and help businesses become more globally competitive.

"We have learned that retail companies have varying needs depending on the type of product or services and specific wants which we have incorporated in our offering. So our objective is to provide a simple, end-to-end solution to retailers addressing small but day-to-day challenges," Romero said.

Store Express offers a full suite of value-added services that could further improve the retail company's day-to-day operations such web/Intranet hosting, Business Continuity and Recovery Service (BCRS), Managed Customer Premises Equipment (CPE), and remote video monitoring.

Remote view, another new GlobeQUEST product, makes it easy for customers to have additional security in their outlets or branches as GlobeQUEST bundles all the necessary equipment, including installation and maintenance, available on a monthly service fee.

With Remote View, a company owner or general manager can view in real time all their online stores, over a customized web portal wherever they are, anytime of the day. The service comes with various types of cameras and additional bandwidth to allow real-time video application.

According to Romero, GlobeQUEST Store Express utilizes three access methods which serve various levels of business requirements.

Store Express On Demand is ideal for retail branches requiring dial-up or wireless access to transmit sales and inventory reports on a periodic basis. It assures a firm of secure communications through a VPN (virtual private network) access running over a private network.

Store Express Online provides retail companies with real-time access to monitor sales and inventory transactions through GlobeQUEST DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) which provides a high-speed data, voice and integrated services over twisted-pair copper wire. It is ideal for branches yielding large transaction volumes, are located along major PoP's (points of presence).

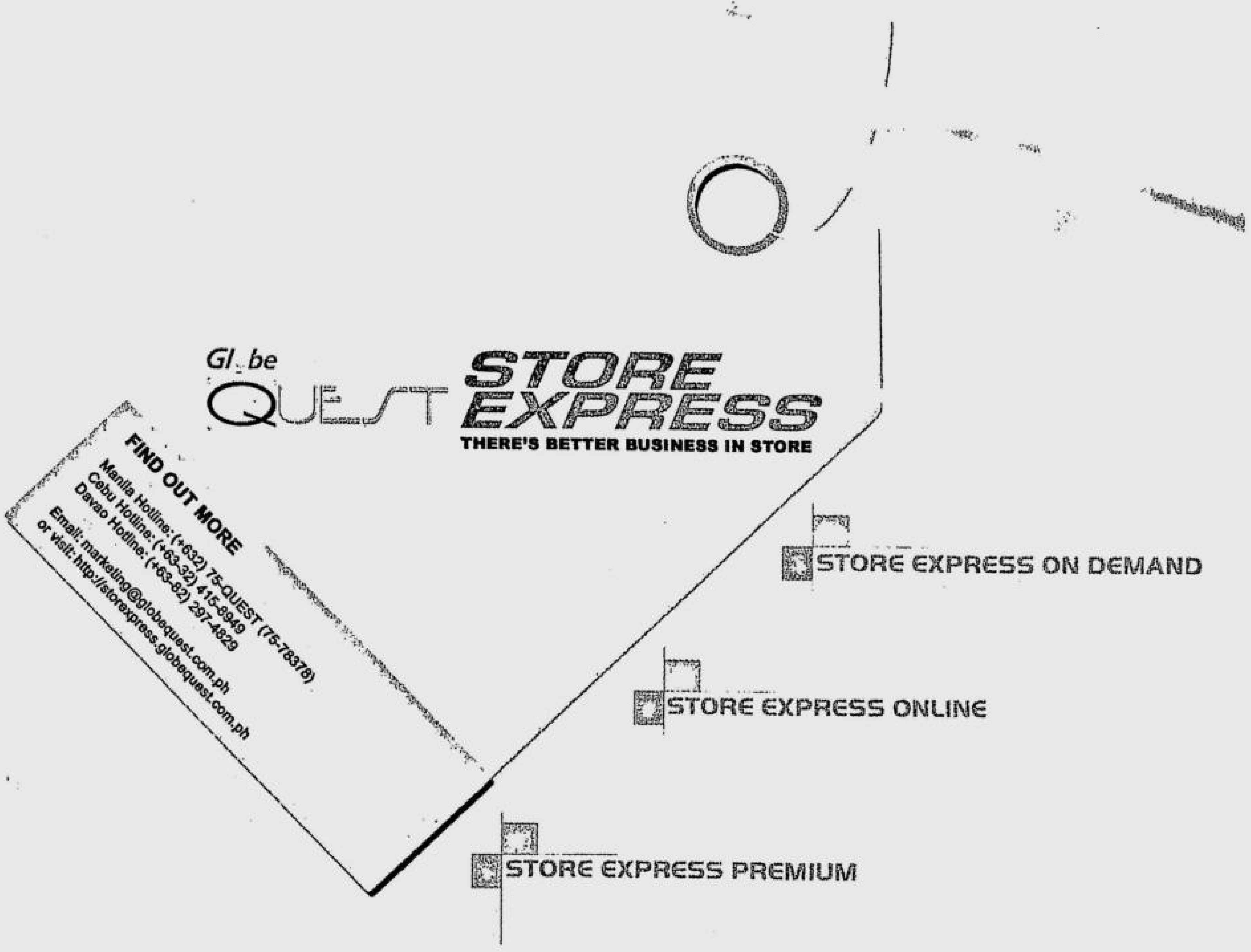
On the other hand, Store Express Premium enables branches with dedicated real-time access to transmit vital business data, voice and video applications over a secure private environment. It offers a great deal of flexibility in deploying an integrated branch office network while ensuring security and privacy as it builds encrypted tunnels between a company headquarters and its branches.

Store Express belongs to the portfolio of GlobeQUEST services for the corporate market, specifically addressing the retail industry.

GlobeQUEST Store Express Launch (from Left): Bienvenido Tantoco III, PRA President and Shopwise General Manager; Gil Genio, Innove Communications CEO; Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Ayala Corporation Executive Managing Director; Boboy Romero, GlobeQUEST Head and Vice President.

STORE EXPRESS, GlobeQUEST's SOLUTION FOR THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

Whether you own a chain of bookstores, drugstores, boutiques, supermarkets or any other retail company, GlobeQUEST Store Express allows you to conveniently link all your branches to your headquarters. This means, you get reliable and fast access to all information on your retail chain's sales and inventory systems at very reasonable rates. With GlobeQUEST Store Express, you also get to choose from a full range of value added services to further improve the efficiency of your company's day-to-day operations.



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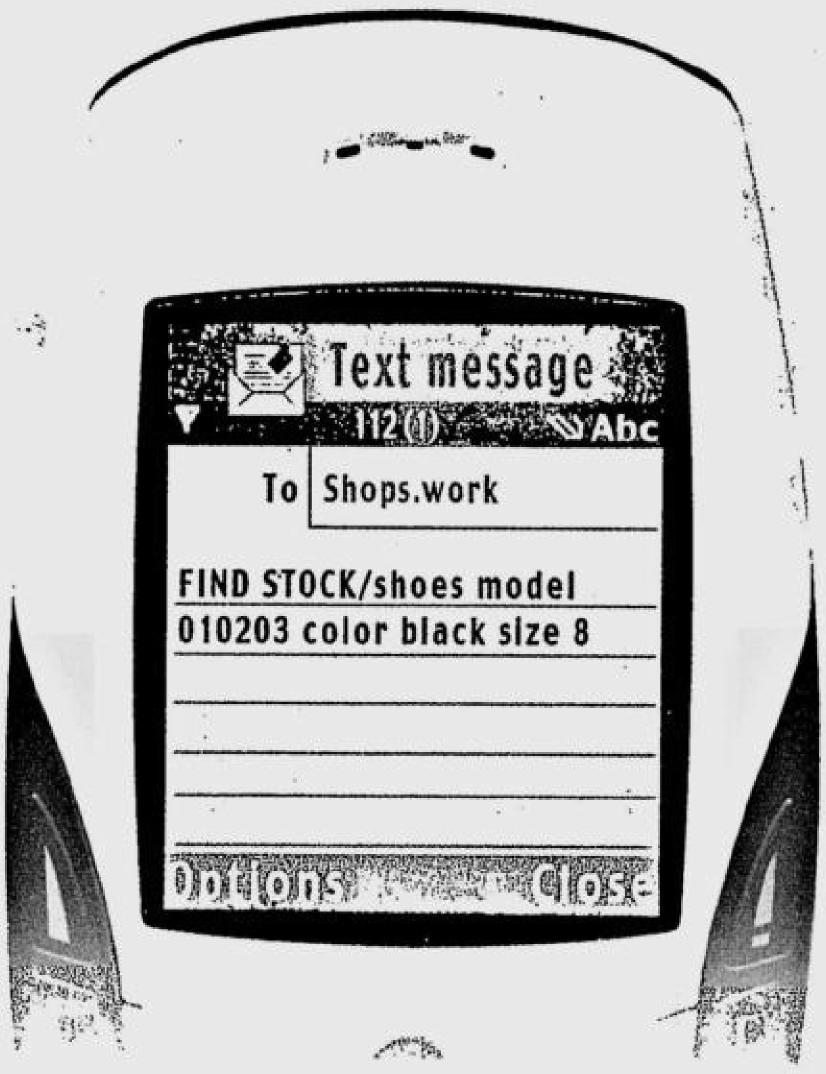
PLDT **Shops.work**

Enabling the Retail Industry to hit it BIG

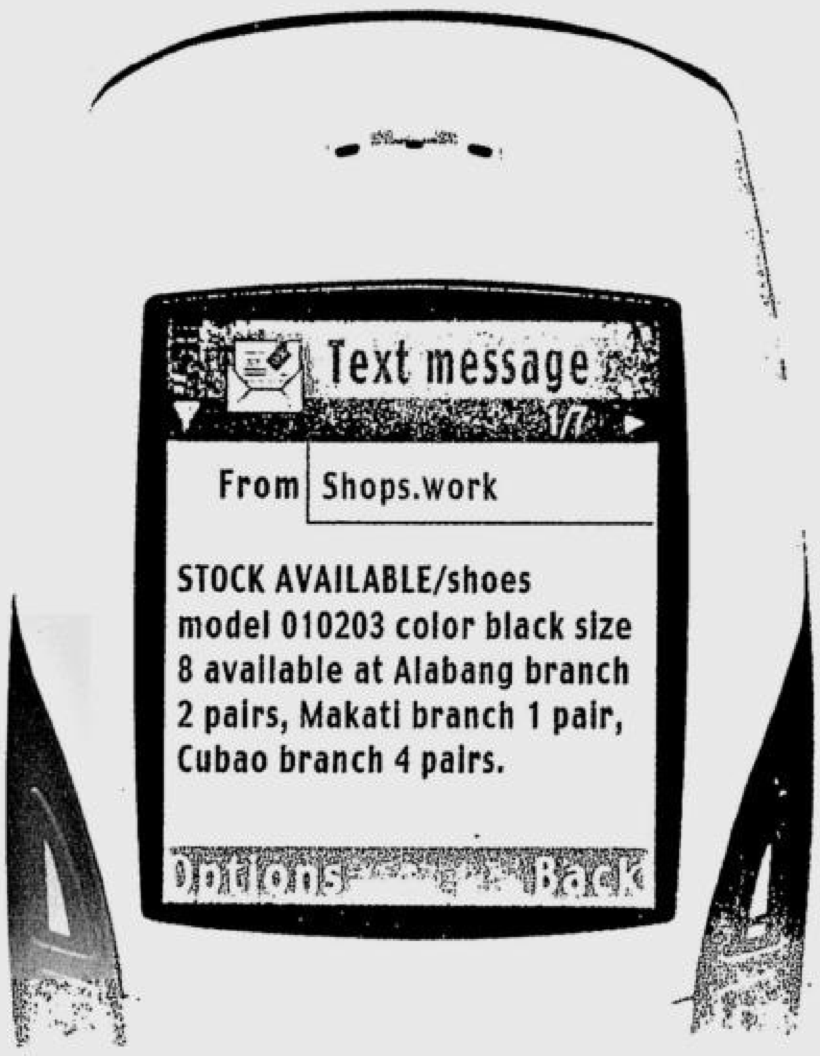
The retail industry has never been as vivacious as it is now. New retail channels, more innovative products and fresh marketing ideas are being introduced to the delight of shopping enthusiasts.

With more establishments vying for a share of the market, the spirit of competition has escalated significantly. In this market-driven environment, exceeding customer expectations is the name of the game. This may seem like a tall order considering the current pace by which trends change. The need for reliable information therefore becomes imperative.



To | Shops.work

FIND STOCK/shoes model 010203 color black size 8



From | Shops.work

STOCK AVAILABLE/shoes model 010203 color black size 8 available at Alabang branch 2 pairs, Makati branch 1 pair, Cubao branch 4 pairs.

The decision is yours, right at your fingertips.

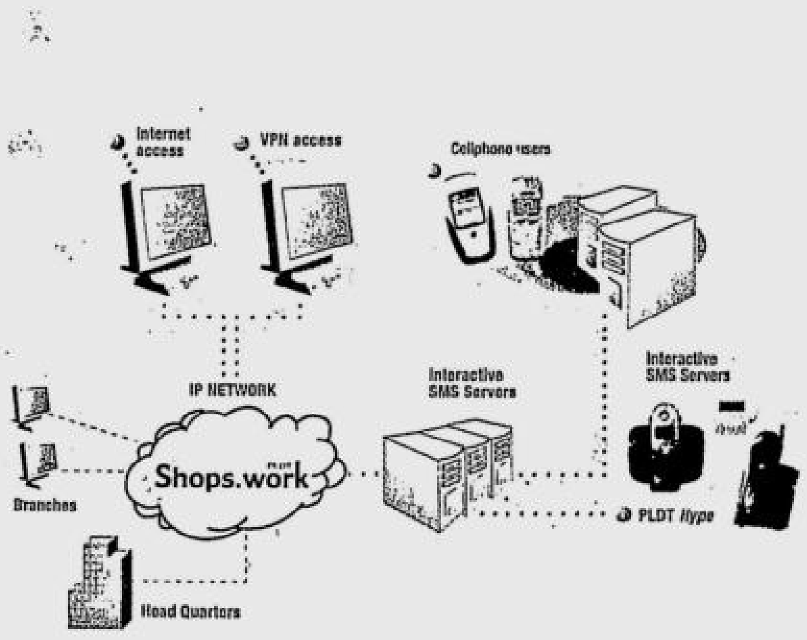
PLDT's Shops.work is the first networking solution in the country specially intended for Franchise and Retail storeowners. It delivers the power to link up all your branches, store outlets, warehouses and customers to your head office in real-time.

A more powerful, feature-rich Shops.work solution has incorporated interactive SMS based ordering, sales, inventory capability into its system. This will give storeowners ease to monitor and receive relevant and timely information simply through their cellphone. Hence, it guarantees delivery of information in a convenient, efficient and cost-effective manner.

In addition, storeowners now have more options to avail of:

- Security camera for increased security video monitoring
- Broadband Internet connectivity (inclusive of e-mail)
- On-line ready POS applications as well as hardware requirements
- A choice between wired and wireless POS equipment
- For an even more powerful service, Shops.work is now available at speeds ranging from 64 kbps to broadband speed of 512 kbps

Ease your day-to-day business challenges with Shops.work. Real-time monitoring. Real-time communications.



PLDT **Shops.work**

To address this market need, PLDT developed a solution to answer a retailer's need for accurate, real-time data delivery. With Shops.work, all stores of a company will be connected, allowing management of business transactions electronically. It is the first networking solution in the country especially designed to address a retailer's need for a more efficient and reliable information integral to effective business operations.

Access to real-time information provides retailers with a competitive advantage since they are able to respond to market trends and changes almost instantly.

PLDT Senior Vice President and Corporate Business Group Head Ernesto R. Alberto notes, "As partners of retailers, PLDT will never cease to come up with more options and better solutions".

As always, PLDT did not stop at providing the first industry-specific solution in the market. After months of continuous study and relentless research on customer needs, a more powerful, feature-rich Shops.work is now available.

Shops.work solution has incorporated interactive SMS based ordering, sales, and inventory capability into its system. This will give storeowners mobility since they can already receive relevant and timely information simply through their cellphone. Hence, it guarantees delivery of information in a convenient, efficient and cost-effective manner.

Aside from on-line monitoring of Point-Of-Sale transactions, storeowners now have options to avail of a security camera as well as Internet connectivity to the basic Shops.work package. With this service in place, retailers will have increased video security monitoring without the need to employ as much security personnel, thus translating to cost savings.

PLDT also partnered with leading POS suppliers to provide customers the option to avail of on-line ready POS applications as well as hardware requirements. Customers even have a choice between wired and wireless POS equipment to suit their needs.

For an even more powerful service, Shops.work is now available at speeds ranging from 64 kbps to broadband speed of 512 kbps.

Shops.work further reinforces PLDT's commitment to constantly support the retail industry by providing them with tools that will further improve business operations and financial performance.

PLDT 75 THINK ahead

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